

PILOTS IN TWO WORLD WARS > **SINKING HMCS OTTAWA** > CANADA'S PACIFIC WAR

LEGION

MAGAZINE

WE ARE CANADIAN HISTORY | WE ARE CANADA TODAY

SPECIAL FEATURE

CRACKS

IN THE SYSTEM

CAN **VETERANS AFFAIRS** BE FIXED?

*Exclusive interview
with Erin O'Toole*

Battle of Britain



JULY/AUGUST 2015

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Corporal Mike Antal
Canadian Air Force, 1987 – 1996
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Mike's expert advice has helped people avoid problems on the ground and in the air.

As an Aero Engine Tech in the Canadian Air Force from 1989 to 1996, Mike worked on aircraft as diverse as Dakotas, Tudors, Dash-8s and the mighty Hercules. Mike's diligence won him a Flight Safety Award and early promotion for spotting a critical flaw in a vital piece of a Hercules engine. Upon pointing this out, the same flaw was found in more Hercules engines. Mike's sharp eye helped avert major problems. That's the same attention to detail he exhibits every day at his Home Hardware.





Battle OF Britain

In the summer and fall of 1940, Germany's air force struck hard at Great Britain's coastal convoys, airfields and major cities, attempting to soften the country for a land invasion. The resulting air battle was pivotal to Britain's war effort.

See page 18

Londoners hunker down on the platform and between the rails at the Aldwych tube station—turned air-raid shelter—on Oct. 8, 1940. One day earlier, the Luftwaffe High Command decided to abandon daylight attacks and strike only under cover of darkness. The Blitz was ineffective militarily, but it seriously damaged Britain's infrastructure.

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By Sharon Adams and Adam Day

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Legion Magazine meets with Minister of Veterans Affairs Erin O'Toole

THIS PHOTO

St. Paul's Cathedral, shrouded in smoke during the Blitz, rises above the bombed London skyline in 1940.

ON THE COVER

A British crew of the Royal Air Force No. 83 Squadron sits on a bomb trolley in front of their Handley Page Hampden twin-engine bomber.



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Meet these key players in the veterans' revolt on page 30.

SOLDIERS ARE NOT PROPS

IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR, The Royal Canadian Legion was founded by returning soldiers who realized they were not getting the government assistance they felt they had earned. They banded together to represent their interests because they believed no one else would.

At *Legion Magazine*, we devote a lot of space to Canada's military history, and this issue is no different. It features stories about Canada's role in the Pacific theatre at the conclusion of the Second World War, a pictorial commemorating the start of the Battle of Britain, and a look at the role of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry in Ypres, Belgium, in 1915.

However, we also report on issues faced by soldiers themselves after they've fought and returned home. In the past few years, we have tracked the ongoing struggle of modern veterans to attain the care and assistance they have earned through their service. In the past year, this struggle has reached a fever pitch; calling it a revolt is no exaggeration.

It is clear that the federal government has also been tracking this rising anger, and in recent months, it has acted to defuse many of the flash-points of irritation and frustration among veterans. Ahead of the upcoming federal election, the order of the day, evidently, is to quash the veterans' revolt. That suits us all perfectly, as long as the solutions are actual and permanent, as long as this is a genuine recognition that Canada's veterans could be better served.

Veterans Affairs Minister Erin O'Toole told a *Legion Magazine* editorial board in April that what drives him to help veterans is "guilt"—at leaving the Canadian Armed Forces just as it entered its first shooting war in 50 years. As a motivator, we think guilt is a good start. But allow us to express our skepticism that it will lead to permanent change. The timing is suspect, and the years of weak efforts at resolving veterans' issues preceding this election inspire little confidence. One old soldier's adage fits here: "Politicians stand for one thing: re-election."

To be blunt: when soldiers wear the flag and fight for

the country, politicians will travel across the globe for a photo opportunity, but they seemingly have less use for an old soldier. Other than appearing in commemoration ceremonies, retired and injured soldiers seem to have little political value. We have been struggling with this dynamic in Canada for almost 100 years. Soldiers and the glories of battle make for dramatic political theatre, but soldiers with broken bodies are too easily disregarded. It is disappointing that even after almost a century, veterans from each new era must battle anew for their fair entitlements and compensations.

Soldiers and the glories of battle make for dramatic political theatre, but soldiers with broken bodies are too easily disregarded.

Our in-depth report on page 30 about current problems and potential solutions at Veterans Affairs Canada hammers home this point. And our interview with Minister O'Toole should help shed some light on the challenges his department faces and the measures he says are underway to address them.

Soldiers are more than props. They sign up to fight and possibly die for their country. They accept all risks in the defence of Canada. In exchange for this service, the government's obligation to care for them is more than a responsibility, much more than a mere legal issue. It is a sacred obligation.

Any government that ignores this obligation does so at its own peril. Canadians do not condone the mistreatment of their veterans. **LM**

ON THIS DATE

JULY >>>

6 JULY 1942

Anne Frank's family goes into hiding in the attic of an Amsterdam warehouse.

7 JULY 1967

The first recipients of the Order of Canada are announced.

14 JULY 1976

Canada abolishes the death penalty.

15 JULY 1870

The Hudson's Bay Company transfers Rupert's Land—a quarter of the continent—to Canada; price: \$1.5 million.

21 JULY 1955

In France, Flight Lieutenant R.G. Morgan and Aircraftman 1st Class H.J. Waters stand on a wing containing a fuel tank to pull the pilot from a burning RCAF jet. They are awarded the George Medal.

22 JULY 1940

No. 5 Elementary Flying Training School officially opens in Lethbridge, Alta.

29 JULY 1883

Second World War despot Benito Mussolini is born in Dovia di Predappio, Italy.



1 JULY 1934

Commodore Percy W. Nelles becomes the first Canadian-born Chief of the Naval Staff.



8 JULY 1892

Nearly 11,000 are homeless and most businesses in ruins after fire destroys St. John's.



16 JULY 1812

James Hancock is killed, the first British casualty of the War of 1812.

17 JULY 1940

HMCS *Skeena* rescues 65 survivors of the SS *Manipur*, sunk by a U-boat north of Scotland.

24 JULY 1917

Conscription becomes law, despite French-Canadian opposition; riots follow in Quebec.

25 JULY 1928

Camp Shilo is formally established near Sewell, Man.

30 JULY 1948

Gallantry awards are given to RCAF members for the first time since the Second World War.

23 JULY 1951

The Royal Canadian Navy Reserve resumes recruiting for the Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service.



THE FACTS: BETWEEN 1942 AND 1946, CLOSE TO 7,000 VOLUNTEERS ENLISTED IN THE WRNCS AND SERVED IN 26 NON-COMBATANT OCCUPATIONS ON CANADIAN NAVAL BASES AT HOME OR ABROAD. IT WAS DISBANDED A SECOND TIME IN 1968.

JULY

2 JULY 1885

The Northwest Rebellion ends with the surrender of Big Bear, and with it, the nomadic life of the Cree.

3 JULY 1944

Four Canadian motor torpedo boats attack a German convoy off St. Malo, France, sinking two ships.

9 JULY 1944

Caen is liberated by the 3rd Canadian Division.



18 JULY 1925

Mein Kampf, Adolph Hitler's blueprint for the Third Reich, is published.

26 JULY 1936

King Edward VIII unveils the Canadian National Vimy Memorial near Arras, France.



31 JULY 1942

Depth charges from HMCS *Skeena* and HMCS *Wetaskiwin* sink U-588 in the North Atlantic.

3 - 4 JULY 1944

War correspondent Matthew Halton reports "fields red with blood and poppies" at Carpiquet Airfield near Caen, France.

5 JULY 1900

At Wolf Spruit, South Africa, Sgt. A.H.L. Richardson rides through heavy fire to rescue a comrade; he is awarded the Victoria Cross.



10 JULY 1943

The 1st Canadian Division is among Allied forces landing in Sicily.

12 JULY 1812

Invading American General William Hull is chased back to Detroit.



19 JULY 1947

A scientific mission to find the magnetic North Pole takes off from RCAF Station Rockcliffe in Ottawa.

11 JULY 1915

In German East Africa, Sub-Lieutenant Harold James Arnold directs naval gunfire until his aircraft ditches. He is awarded the Distinguished Service Order.

13 JULY 1943

Warrant Officer James Kunz, of Saskatchewan, is among a glider tug's crew lost while dropping parachutists to capture a Sicilian bridge.

20 JULY 1963

The RCAF transports a scientific mission to record a total eclipse of the sun in Central Canada.

27 JULY 1929

The Geneva Convention, dealing with treatment of prisoners of war, is signed by 53 nations.

28 JULY 1914

Austria-Hungary declares war on Serbia, beginning the First World War.

THE FACTS: THE CANADIAN NATIONAL VIMY MEMORIAL IS THE CENTREPIECE OF A 250-ACRE PRESERVED BATTLEFIELD PARK INCLUDING A PORTION OF THE GROUND OVER WHICH THE CANADIAN CORPS FOUGHT IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR. THE MEMORIAL TOOK MONUMENT DESIGNER WALTER SEYMOUR ALLWARD ELEVEN YEARS TO BUILD.

August On This Date Events >>>

Visit our website legionmagazine.com

The items will appear August 1.

Here's a taste of what to expect.



8 AUGUST 1918

Canada's Hundred Days begins with the Battle of Amiens, a surprise advance of 19 kilometres in three days, the first of many successes.



letters



VISITING FLANDERS FIELDS

I RECALL QUITE VIVIDLY THE YEAR

I was in Grade 4 and learned “In Flanders Fields.” I had an awesome teacher. Mrs. Metcalfe taught us not only the poem, but the story behind the poem. I grew up visualizing those scenes of the “crosses row on row” and hoping there would be reasons to believe John McCrae’s poem would never be forgotten (“The poet and the poppy,” May/June).

With my love of history, I was fortunate to travel to Europe last June on a bus tour, at the same time as the 70th anniversary of the Normandy landings. I paused at the humble crosses and memorials at Beaumont-Hamel and Beny-sur-Mer among others in France. Each one had a different impact on me.

However, the one with the biggest impact had to be in Belgium. I silently repeated the poem “In Flanders Fields” as we spent time at Essex Farm [where the poem was written]. I found simple unmarked crosses and thanked the young man who gave his life to make my world a better place.

McCrae may never have seen the impact of his poem and the lasting legacy he left us. Even 100 years later, the words continue to link us and future generations.

SHARLENE REID, POWELL RIVER, B.C.

ISSUE WELL DONE

THE MARCH/APRIL 2015 ISSUE OF

Legion Magazine was outstanding.

I have long enjoyed the magazine for its informative and insightful articles of interest not only to Legion members, but to their families and the communities where they live.

Of special merit in the issue are the “Veterans Benefits Guide 2015” and “War after War” by Adam Day. Well done!

LARRY VIPOND, MESA, ARIZONA

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INFORMATION FROM TORTURE SHOULDN'T BE USED

REGARDING "EYE ON DEFENCE"

(March/April 2015), the issue for me is not that we don't use the received intelligence material. It is to cajole our

partners not to use torture to obtain the intelligence in the first place. This is because: a) torture is morally wrong; b) as outlined in the cited lengthy American report, torture was used by the American intelligence services and it did not lead to "real effective" usable intelligence; and c) it directly puts our armed forces at risk of being tortured if captured.

PETER MADELOSO, WOLFVILLE, N.S.

ON WEARING LEGION MEDALS

I WOULD LIKE TO COMMENT ON

Legion members who wear many medals (Letters, March/April). These medals, worn on the right side of their tunics, have been awarded for many accomplishments in their particular Legion branch. Many also wear various medals on their left side to indicate their military service.

Believe me, those who wear Legion medals have spent years working to make their Legion branch successful.

ROY FOSTER, WETASKIWIN, ALTA.

PROTECTING MILITARY MEDALS

FAMILIES HAVE BEEN DISPLAYING THEIR

loved one's medals on their right chest since the First World War to remember and honour their soldiers. Look at Charlotte Woods, known as the first Silver Cross mother of Canada. She proudly displayed her sons' medals on her right chest and no one arrested her. Why would they?

Medals are for sale in pawn shops, flea markets and on eBay. If someone wants to protect the medals, start protecting them from being sold and stop picking on the families who have lost their soldiers.

BARRY WILSON, CAMBRIDGE, ONT.

OUR READERS RESPOND

IN MAY/JUNE, WE ASKED OUR READERS IF THEY HAD MEMORIES OF VE-DAY.

I WAS ONLY EIGHT YEARS OLD

at the time and lived with my parents at Stoneleigh on the Waterloo line up to London. I don't recall much of the morning, but my parents decided that we would go to London, then Buckingham Palace to see the Royal Family. Once we arrived, the crowds were enormous. It seemed like the whole country had the same idea.

As I was quite small, I was unable to see anything but the people in front of us. My mother or father thought it would be a good idea if I made my way to the front, so I could see the balcony where

the King and Queen were expected. I squeezed my way through everybody and reached the railings outside the palace. The whole Royal Family came out and waved to the crowd below. The place was in an uproar.

In due course, those standing on the balcony went back inside and the crowd started to disperse. Naturally this took some time. I tried to find my parents but with no success. They were probably



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trying to find me with the same result. After a while, I decided I should go home, but I didn't have any money.

A soldier spoke to me and I explained the situation. He asked me if I knew how to get home, so I told him I had to get to Waterloo station, then catch the 19 train. He said not to worry. He would get me to Waterloo and would buy me a ticket to Stoneleigh. It never occurred to me to go to the police. When we got to Waterloo station, he purchased a ticket and saw me on the train.

It takes about 25 minutes for the trip. Knowing my parents were not likely home, I went across the road to Auntie Kitty (not a real aunt but my mom's great friend). Aunt Kitty took me in and made me some toast and milk. It seemed like a long time, maybe two hours, had passed before

the phone rang and Auntie answered it. I didn't hear anything at first, then Auntie Kitty said, "Pat, it's all right. Bruce is here with me."

After some time, my parents came and Auntie Kitty went outside to talk to them. When she came back, she said I could go home, if I had finished my toast and milk. I went outside to my parents, who hugged me and we went back to our house. I thought I may be in trouble when we got home but nothing happened and it wasn't mentioned again.

In those days, with the war just finished, my parents must have been frantic with worry. I was never concerned that I was "lost." I knew where I was and I knew how to get home. The only problem was that I didn't have any money, but the soldier took care of that.

BRUCE DUNDAS, VANCOUVER LM

A QUESTION FOR OUR READERS

This August, The Royal Canadian Legion will again host the National Youth Track and Field Championships. This year it is in Sainte-Thérèse, Que., Aug. 5-11. Do you have memories of organizing or participating in Legion track events?

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STUDYING THE BENEFITS OF MEDICAL MARIJUANA

A **CLINICAL TRIAL** examining medical marijuana for treatment of post-traumatic stress disorder is underway in British Columbia, where marijuana, produced legally or otherwise, is estimated to contribute as much to the provincial economy as agriculture and forestry.

Using vaporizers, 40 volunteers with PTSD, two-thirds of them military or police veterans, will try various strains of marijuana (or a placebo) and report the effect on such symptoms as flashbacks, sleep problems, anger and anxiety.

The research will be conducted

by University of British Columbia psychology and medical researchers at its Okanagan campus.

Tilray, one of 16 authorized

Health Canada marijuana producers, has indicated it will cover the \$350,000 in costs—and supply the various strains of marijuana.



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One Halifax veteran said that marijuana slows down his mental reactions, so if he hears a loud noise, he doesn't automatically dive for cover.

The company grows, processes, packages and ships medical marijuana from its 60,000-square-foot facility near Nanaimo, B.C.

The research will shed a little light on the often heated debate around medical use of marijuana. A Supreme Court ruling in 2000 resulted in Health Canada approving the use of medical marijuana in 2001, although it has continued its campaign against its use as a recreational drug. Aside from problems with addiction, lung health and changes to the brain, particularly for teens, pot use remains illegal.

Veterans Affairs Canada has covered veterans' prescription costs since 2008, although debate about whether to continue, cap or cancel the program has increased as the number of veterans claiming reimbursement has grown. The cost of those prescriptions has increased to \$4.3 million from \$417,000 in 2013-14, as the number of veterans with prescriptions quadrupled to about 600, the Canadian Press discovered under access-to-information requests.

Many veterans plagued by pain or operational stress injuries such as PTSD, depression and anxiety have found that marijuana works better for them than pharmaceutical prescription drugs. One Halifax veteran said in a recent interview with *Legion Magazine* that marijuana slows down his mental reactions, so if he hears a loud noise, he doesn't automatically dive for cover,

or if cut off in traffic, he doesn't fly instantly into a road rage.

But he does have to bear disapproval in the community, including those at VAC who handle his reimbursement claims. "I'm not an addict, and I won't keep using it forever. But right now I need it."

Moral objections to the use of a doctor-prescribed substance aside, critics point to the growing pile of studies documenting the health risks of marijuana, and the scarcity of research on its benefits. This is hardly surprising given that growing, selling and possessing the drug for recreational use have been criminal offences for a very long time, although support seems to be growing for decriminalization of possession for personal use.


THC (delta-9 tetrahydrocannabinol) is the active ingredient in marijuana, hashish and hash oil, and its potency has quadrupled over the decades since the flower-power generation grew up. Within minutes of passing through the lungs, THC relaxes and enlarges airways, expands blood vessels and lowers blood pressure. In the brain, THC mimics the neurotransmitter anandamide, binding to its receptors and activating cells throughout the brain involved in short-term memory, muscle co-ordination and feelings of well-being. The pleasant effects wear off in a few hours, but the THC continues acting on the body for a day or more, often affecting mood with unpleasant

side effects, like nervousness or anxiety, symptoms to which the young are particularly vulnerable.

A study at the New York University Langone Medical Center found brains of people with PTSD have more anandamide receptors in the parts of the brain associated with fear and anxiety, and lower levels of the neurotransmitter. It is thought the brain compensates for lower levels of anandamide by increasing the number of anandamide receptors and that THC activates those receptors, suppressing traumatic memories and reducing PTSD symptoms.

But animal studies have shown the beneficial effects of THC are short-lived, as though prolonged exposure makes the brain less sensitive to THC. More study is needed to determine if it's the same with humans—and humans whose brain chemistry has been altered by PTSD.

And much more study is needed to determine the full range of positive effects of THC on human brains generally, and on brains affected by PTSD, including how much is needed to produce the positive effects, and at what dosage or length of use does marijuana stop delivering the benefits.

Yes, marijuana poses health risks; so does taking aspirin and undergoing chemotherapy. The difference is that research has established safe doses for the pharmaceuticals, so doctors can help patients decide whether the benefit outweighs the risk, and if so, prescribe the proper dosage. Veterans prescribed marijuana deserve no less. 

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FRIENDLY FIRE INCIDENT INVESTIGATED



BEGINNING IN IRAQ, the lingering mystery about the exact events that led to the death of Canadian Special Operations Regiment Sergeant Andrew Doiron at the hands of allied Kurdish *peshmerga* forces has been mostly resolved with the release of a highly redacted report into the event.

More than two months after Doiron's death, the Canadian Forces National Investigation Service (CFNIS) has released a censored three-page report which concluded: "This CFNIS investigation into the Operational Sudden Death of Sgt DOIRON revealed he was killed as a result of Peshmerga Forces mistaking him and other members of SOTF [REDACTED] for ISIS fighters."

"SOTF" stands for Special Operations Task Force, and refers to the name given to the Canadian element deployed to northern Iraq, which is redacted because it is classified.

In any case, the narrative of the incident explained in the report makes for interesting reading and

Sergeant Andrew Doiron was shot and killed in Iraq on March 6, 2015.

tells a compelling story, so here are the highlights, using the exact language and punctuation in the report.

In the introductory letter we are told that: "CFNIS conducted an independent investigation to determine whether criminality played a role in the death of Sgt Doiron and, if necessary, lay appropriate charges."

The story begins with the deployment of the investigators: "At 2130 hrs, 6 Mar 15, Capt UTTON...advised that members on standby for the high readiness deployment for "Op Impact" were now on 24 hrs standby to deploy to Kuwait. Sgt TUSTIN and Cpl SPRINGSTEAD were immediately contacted and later advised that they would be investigating the death of a 1 x CAF mbr and 3 x CAF injured mbrs from CANSOFCOM who were operating in Northern Iraq."

As spelled out above, the incident not only resulted in Doiron's death but also in the wounding of three of his Canadian Special Operations

Forces Command (CANSOFCOM) patrol mates.

"During this investigation, many interviews were conducted, participation in the mortuary affairs processes occurred, and many physical sites were visited. Though not under the jurisdiction of the CFNIS, the friendly forces at OP [REDACTED] agreed to and were interviewed."

The redacted name of the observation post above refers to where the *peshmerga* forces were positioned. The report notes that Doiron's patrol was scheduled and expected at the observation post.

However, as Doiron and his patrol approached the post, the following occurred: "upon hearing OP [REDACTED] members racking their weapons, Sgt DOIRON responded with "wow, wow, wow, Canada" [REDACTED AT LENGTH] the OP [REDACTED] and got shot; and [REDACTED] all four members of the patrol were wounded during the incident."

The CFNIS interviewed all friendly forces that were at the OP, including the shooter. The following are the salient points that were learned: "CFNIS Investigators asked if sleep

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"I know there's a natural human tendency to want to ascribe blame in this incident, but that Kurdish soldier did not wake up that morning hoping to kill a Canadian."

deprivation or the stress of being on high alert, possibly might have contributed to this mistake, [REDACTED] admitted "yes, yes, yes, yes," on that day [REDACTED] and we were exhausted."

And while the final query directed by CFNIS investigators toward the *peshmerga* shooters seems to be a bit of a leading question, the investigations will reportedly go

no further. Currently there are no plans for an official board of inquiry into the incident.

As CANSOFCOM commander Brigadier-General Mike Rouleau noted at the press conference when this report was released. "I know there's a natural human tendency to want to ascribe blame in this incident, but that Kurdish soldier did not wake up that morning hoping to

kill a Canadian. It's a case of a tragic accident brought on by a certain amount of miscommunication and misidentification."

Defence Minister Jason Kenney also supported the report's findings. "Canadian Armed Forces investigations into the events surrounding Sgt. Doiron's death are now complete, and I accept the findings which reflect the fact that Sgt. Doiron and his team acted with the utmost professionalism and performed to the highest of standards," said Kenney. "We will do everything we can to reduce the risk of accidental military deaths, like that of Sgt. Doiron. The Canadian Armed Forces will continue with Sgt. Doiron's mission: to help our allies overcome ISIS's campaign of terror."

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THE QUEEN EXPRESSES HER CONDOLENCES

THREE MEMBERS of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders based in Hamilton, Ont., recently travelled to Buckingham Palace to meet with Queen Elizabeth II.

The visit came as a result of the shooting death last fall of Argyll and Sutherland Highlander Corporal Nathan Cirillo, who was standing guard at the National War Memorial when he was gunned down by a militant inspired by Islamic extremism.

In the aftermath of that event, the Queen—who is colonel-in-chief of the regiment—wrote to the unit to express her sympathies. In the ensuing correspondence, the Queen invited the unit's leadership to visit her so she could “offer her personal condolences on the death of the corporal, talk about the battle honour the regiment received for Afghanistan and other regimental business,” reported the *Hamilton Spectator*.

The three members who made the trip were commanding officer Lieutenant-Colonel Lawrence Hatfield, Honorary Colonel Ron Foxcroft and Honorary Lt.-Col. Rick Kennedy. During the visit, Foxcroft gave the Queen a wall hanging which read: “With loyalty and affection and in memory of the 1,660

members of the regiment killed in service of their sovereign and country.”

Foxcroft later joked that the gift, which also contained a poppy shaped from dozens of whistles, could be useful in ridding the Queen's gardens of Canada geese.

IN OTHER NEWS from the fight against ISIS, Canada's mission in the Middle East has a new commander. Brig.-Gen. Lise Bourgon, previously commander of 12 Wing Shearwater, has taken over the top spot from Brig.-Gen. Dan Constable. A former Sea King pilot, Bourgon will be based in Kuwait alongside Canada's fighter jets and reconnaissance and refuelling aircraft. “I am honoured to be leading a team of highly trained professionals working diligently to assist in halting and degrading ISIS,” said Bourgon.

As reported by the military, Canada's involvement in the coalition against ISIS has so far included at least 896 airstrikes, 163 reconnaissance missions and deliveries of more than four million kilograms of fuel to coalition aircraft. On March 30, Op Impact was extended for up to another year and its mission expanded to include airstrikes against ISIS targets in Syria. **LM**

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Brigadier-General
Lise Bourgon



eye on defence

BY DAVID J. BERCUSON

New minister needs a new defence strategy

Figuring out where Canadian defence policy and priorities are going in this post-Afghanistan era has become exceedingly difficult.

For one thing, defence policy is supposedly still being guided by the Canada First Defence Strategy (CFDS), which was first announced some seven years ago and which is, in many respects, considerably obsolete. To take just one example, it lists one of Canada's top defence priorities as providing security for the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics! Work on a revised CFDS was underway as recently as last spring under a blanket of secrecy, but there is no sign that it will appear any time soon.

The question of how the Royal Canadian Air Force will move ahead to replace the CF-18 fighters that are currently bombing ISIL targets in Syria and Iraq, and showing the flag in Eastern Europe, is still unresolved. The report of a special committee to examine whether the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter should be purchased to replace the CF-18, is still under wraps. It is anyone's guess whether or not it, too, will see light of day after the next federal election.

Canada also has Special Operations Forces in the Kurdish province of Iraq training *peshmerga* fighters and probably also acting as forward air controllers for coalition airstrikes against ISIL, but the latter mission has never been confirmed.

The Royal Canadian Navy now consists of fewer than a dozen surface vessels, some of which are undergoing long-term refits, and the task of replacing the Halifax-class frigates and Canada's lone remaining destroyer with a new class of surface ships is behind schedule. The only bright spot in the naval picture is that all four of Canada's submarines are now deployable. Some have already carried out missions.



Defence Minister Jason Kenney tours HMCS *Chicoutimi*, one of Canada's submarines, in Esquimalt, B.C.

Canada's new minister of National Defence, Jason Kenney, is a powerhouse in the Tory hierarchy and his appointment is a sure sign that Prime Minister Stephen Harper believes that Canada needs a robust military. Kenney virtually remade Canadian immigration strategy for the better when he held that portfolio, and he is certainly one of the people that Harper listens to. But the new federal budget won't give Kenney much to work with if the Conservative government is re-elected. It does provide for some increases in the annual adjustment of the Department of National Defence budget over a 10-year period, but the increases are not scheduled to begin until after the election.

Yet Canada was one of the first nations to step up when a coalition of air forces intervened in the Libyan civil war in 2011. A Canadian officer commanded the coalition air campaign. Canada was quick to commit fighter jets to bolster Eastern Europe when the Crimean crisis broke in the spring of 2014 and to the anti-ISIL air campaign that began at the end of the year.

So how should we read the tea leaves? On one hand, DND has a

strong, decisive minister and a slight increase in defence expenditure.

On the other hand, the government clearly has no intention of raising defence expenditure as a percentage of GDP to anywhere near the two per cent called for by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Still, the government clearly sees military intervention in foreign crises as a tool of Canadian diplomacy even though those interventions are being spearheaded by a shrinking navy, an increasingly obsolete fighter air force and (with the exception of Canada's special forces) an undertrained army.

This government has a basic choice to make: either continue with its ad hoc approach to defence policy and planning, or find out from Canadians what sort of military they want and are prepared to pay for and then shape public views and government requirements into a coherent defence policy. It is understandable that the government will wait for the outcome of the election before proceeding on a path to revitalization, but if the Conservative government is re-elected, expect the state of Canada's military to be near the top of the list for action. **LM**

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Battle OF Britain

IN PICTURES

The skies over the English Channel were grey on July 10, 1940, and laden with the shadow of war. The air battle between Germany's Luftwaffe and the British Royal Air Force (RAF) Bomber and Coastal Commands began on this day with raids on convoys in the English Channel off North Foreland and Dover. It was the prelude to the Luftwaffe's main effort in mid-August, when its focus shifted to attacks on RAF radar bases and airfields. In early September, the attacks shifted again, to London, Coventry (BELOW) and other major cities; the Blitz (from *Blitzkrieg*, or lightning war) continued until May 1941. More than 100 Canadians served with the 3,000 pilots of the Royal Air Force who repulsed the attacks in dramatic air battles, turning the tide of the war. More than 500 aviators died, including 29 Canadians.





Danger from above

Coventry, in Britain's West Midlands, is a smoking ruin following an air raid on Nov. 14, 1940. The attack by more than 500 Luftwaffe bombers left an estimated 568 dead. A Royal Observer Corps aircraft spotter (INSET) scans the London skies for incoming bombers. St. Paul's Cathedral is in the background.





Their finest hour

Pilots with No. 87 Squadron run to their Hawker Hurricane single-seat fighters at a base in Marville, France, in 1940. This squadron was part of the British Expeditionary Force battling the Luftwaffe close to German territory. Nurses at a London hospital (OPPOSITE) carry baby respirators during a gas-attack drill in 1940. It was RAF crews fighting the Battle of Britain that Prime Minister Winston Churchill spoke of, on August 20, when he uttered the famous words, "Never was so much owed by so many to so few."



Victory over Japa



Canada's Pacific War contributions may have been relatively minor, but our sacrifices were no less vital

BY MARK ZUEHLKE

On Aug. 9, 1945, some 700 prisoners of war—including 166 Canadians—were working as slave labourers in the Omine coal mine on Japan's Kyushu Island. The mine was situated about 160 kilometres northeast of Nagasaki. At about 10 o'clock that morning, air-raid sirens sounded and the prisoners were herded underground. When they emerged, huge clouds of smoke were rising from Nagasaki. It was soon rumoured that a special bomb had been dropped.

On Aug. 15, Emperor Hirohito announced Japan's unconditional surrender to the Allies and the mine's guards ceased confining the prisoners. But it would be weeks—long after the formal surrender was signed on Sept. 1, 1945, aboard the USS *Missouri*—before American soldiers liberated them.

The atomic bombing of Hiroshima on Aug. 6 and Nagasaki three days later forced Japan's surrender. Whether the massive destruction wrought by these bombs was warranted is a moral question that continues to be debated to this day.

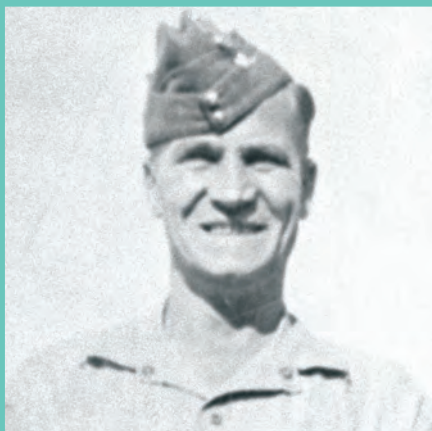
Major-General Bert Hoffmeister, commander of the 24,000-strong Canadian

Army Pacific Force (CAPF), certainly believed it prevented cataclysmic losses of both military and civilian lives that would have resulted from the Allied invasion planned for that autumn. The CAPF was to join the invasion's second phase—Operation Coronet—in the early spring of 1946 with landings on the main island of Honshu. Instead, the CAPF was disbanded on Sept. 1, without having left North America.

Canada's role in the Pacific theatre dated back to before hostilities between Japan and the Allies broke out on Dec. 7, 1941, triggered by Japan's surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, the United States naval base in Hawaii. Over the previous spring and summer, the Royal Canadian Navy armed merchant cruiser HMCS *Prince Robert* spent three uneventful months patrolling from New Zealand back to her home base in Esquimalt, B.C., arriving on Aug. 24.

Meanwhile, tension between the Allies and Japan continued to mount and Britain's high command began assessing its ability to defend its Southeast Asian possessions. Hong Kong was clearly vulnerable. In late September, Canada was asked to reinforce it. On Oct. 27, 1941, a contingent of 1,975 Canadian soldiers sailed from Vancouver aboard the troop transport ship *Awatea* with *Prince Robert* as escort. Two battalions formed the fighting backbone of the contingent: Quebec City's Royal Rifles and the Winnipeg Grenadiers. Brigadier John Lawson commanded. The force landed in Hong Kong on Nov. 16.

Torontonians gather to read the Aug. 14, 1945, edition of *The Globe and Mail* (OPPOSITE), which ran the banner headline "PEACE AT LAST" after Japan's emperor announced his country's unconditional surrender. Company Sergeant Major John Osborn of the Winnipeg Grenadiers (LEFT) threw himself onto a grenade defending Mount Butler, a hill in Hong Kong.



JOHN H. BOYD/CITY OF TORONTO ARCHIVES/983390-DND/LAC/PA-37483

Immediate hostilities were unexpected, but on Dec. 8, within hours of the Pearl Harbor attack and while the Canadians were still acclimatizing, Japanese forces out of China attacked Britain's defensive line on the mainland.

Hong Kong's defenders numbered barely 14,000—soldiers from the colony itself, Britain, India, Singapore and Canada. By the morning of Dec. 13, the mainland defences were overrun. An amphibious crossing on the night of Dec. 18 brought the Japanese into contact with the Canadians. Early next morning, the Winnipeg Grenadiers 'A' Company, led by Company

Sergeant Major John Osborn, launched a bayonet charge that recaptured Mount Butler. After staving off numerous counterattacks, the company was desperately short of ammunition and surrounded. Grenades showered into the perimeter, and Osborn hurled them back until one fell that was impossible to pick up and toss. He threw himself onto it and was killed instantly. Osborn's sacrifice earned a Victoria Cross.

No amount of heroism could save Hong Kong. Lawson died on Dec. 19, when his headquarters was overrun. On the island's eastern side, the Royal Rifles fought a battle of costly counterattacks as they were slowly driven back to Stanley Fort. To the west, the Grenadiers—particularly 'D' Company—kept the island's main north-south road open until Dec. 22. When it surrendered that day, the company counted only 38 men. The remaining Grenadiers fought on, even managing a counterattack on Christmas Day. But at 3:15 p.m., a general surrender was ordered.

The Canadians had lost 290 killed and 493 wounded. The survivors faced more than three and a half years of harsh captivity that claimed 264 more lives. Among those taken prisoner were two nursing sisters—Kay Christie and Anna May Waters—both freed in late-1943 prisoner exchanges. But not all the Canadian prisoners were taken at Hong Kong.

Even though it was small compared to the war against Germany, Canada's role in the Pacific War was still significant. For example, about 400 Canadians, many of them Radio Detection Finding specialists,



served in the RAF's Far Eastern Command. A number of Canadian pilots also flew Hurricanes out of Singapore and the island of Java in Indonesia. As Japan invaded British Malaya (culminating in the Battle of Singapore), Java and Burma (Myanmar), several of these Canadians were captured, including 26 when Java fell on March 8, 1942.

The following month, about 70 more Canadian airmen joined RAF squadrons in the Pacific. With Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) threatened, the Royal Canadian Air Force's No. 413 Squadron rushed from Scotland to be the first Canadian air unit in Southeast Asia. The squadron's first

Catalina flying boat reached Ceylon on March 28 and the second, piloted by Squadron Leader Leonard Birchall, arrived on April 2.

Two days later, Birchall detected an enemy fleet steaming toward the island and radioed a warning before enemy fighters shot down his plane. Two of the eight-man crew were killed and the rest, including Birchall, were captured. But his warning allowed Ceylon's defenders to meet the Japanese flotilla with air and naval forces. After a protracted battle that cost the British heavy losses, the Japanese fleet withdrew. Although this action was more intended as

a raid than an invasion, Birchall was declared the "Saviour of Ceylon." He also received the Distinguished Flying Cross. No. 413 Squadron remained in Ceylon, logging some 11,000 operational hours before returning to England on Feb. 23, 1945.

The RCAF contingent in India and Ceylon continued to grow throughout 1942. By year's end, there were about 1,100 personnel serving with RAF fighter and

The Grenadiers kept the island's main north-south road open until Dec. 22. When it surrendered that day, the company counted only 38 men.



bomber squadrons. Because of the number of Canadian flyers, an RCAF District Headquarters was authorized in May 1943 and opened in New Delhi that October. It operated until June 1945, reaching a staffing peak of 191 responsible for administering a 3,000-strong Canadian contingent scattered throughout India and Southeast Asia.

The threat to Ceylon coincided with the Japanese seizure of the westernmost American Aleutian islands of Kiska and Attu, on June 6 and 7, 1942, respectively. On June 20, Japanese submarine *I-26* surfaced about three kilometres off the Estevan Point lighthouse on Vancouver Island and fired 17 shots from its 5.5-inch deck gun. The shells fell short into the sea or exploded in the surrounding dense forest. Beginning on Nov. 3, 1944, incendiary balloons were launched from Japan to ride the jet stream to North America to start forest fires. Some 9,000 to 10,000 balloons were launched before the campaign ceased in mid-April 1945. Those that reached British Columbia caused no notable damage, but remnants are still found today.

The submarine attack, combined with the Aleutian invasion, gave urgency to the defence of the West Coast. Two army divisions were deployed and naval and air assets strengthened. RCAF No. 8 (Bomber Reconnaissance) Squadron and two fighter squadrons, No. 111 and No. 14 deployed from British Columbia to Alaska. The latter flew 30 dive-bombing raids against Kiska.

American plans to retake Kiska and Attu developed rapidly. On May 11, 1943, Attu was assaulted and a bloody battle yielded about 2,350 Japanese dead and only 24 taken prisoner before its fall on May 30. American losses were 549 killed and 1,148 wounded.

Nursing sister Lieutenant Kay Christie (OPPOSITE) is met by her father in Montreal after returning from Hong Kong, where she and Anna May Waters were the first and only Canadian nursing sisters taken as prisoners of war. Liberated Canadian prisoners (ABOVE) at Shamshuipo Camp enjoy a visit from crew of HMCS *Prince Robert*.

Turning to Kiska, the Americans sought assistance from a Canadian brigade group to build an invasion force totalling about 34,500 troops. To meet the request, the Canadian government passed an order-in-council on June 18, 1943, authorizing soldiers enrolled for compulsory service under the National Resources Mobilization Act to be employed in Alaska, including the Aleutians.

From Pacific Command, the 13th Infantry Brigade was deployed, with four battalions—Canadian Fusiliers, Winnipeg Grenadiers, Le Régiment de Hull and Rocky Mountain Rangers—and supporting artillery, engineer, machine-gun and ambulance units. This force constituted 4,831 all ranks. Also making its inaugural combat debut was a combined American-Canadian elite unit—First Special Service Force (FSSF)—with about 500 Canadians present. This brought the total Canadian contribution to approximately 5,300.

Early in the morning of Aug. 15, the FSSF—soon nicknamed the Devil's Brigade—led the assault. Impenetrable fog blinded the invaders and a chaotic roaming gun battle ensued. Sporadic exchanges continued for two days as soldiers groped about in weather conditions veterans dubbed the "Optical Aleutians." On Aug. 17, they realized in dismay that the Japanese had abandoned the island days earlier. No Canadian was killed by friendly fire, but one was wounded. One Canadian officer was killed by a Japanese mine. During the ensuing occupation,



three more Canadians were killed by enemy booby traps or ammunition accidents. The last Canadians gratefully left Kiska on Jan. 12, 1944.

Early in 1943, British Chindits—deep-penetration airborne troops led by Brigadier Orde Wingate—had thrust into northern Burma, relying on airdrops for resupply. With the tide turning against Japan in early 1944, it was decided to expand this long-range penetration. Strongholds, including airstrips, were established far behind Japanese front lines in Burma and eastern India. Thirteen Canadian Air Liaison Officers provided ground radio communication for one such stronghold.

Some supplies were moved through the dense jungle by mules—and 180 Canadian mule skinnners actually delivered 1,600 animals from Canada—but most supplies were delivered by air. RCAF No. 435 Squadron and No. 436 Squadron, flying Douglas C-47 Dakotas, joined these operations in December 1944 and January 1945. Supplies, mail and reinforcements were airdropped or landed on the short airstrips. Seven aircraft were lost on operational missions, with 6 aircrew killed, 14 missing and 5 wounded. The two squadrons collectively airlifted almost 56,500 tons of supplies and 29,000 troops, and evacuated about 1,000 casualties by war's end.

Another vital player in the Burma campaign was the Sea Reconnaissance Unit. This unit of frogmen was the inspiration of Canadian Lieutenant-Colonel Bruce Wright, who oversaw its training and led it. The frogmen served as pathfinders, identifying viable river-crossing points. Facing Japanese troops, not to mention crocodiles, the unit proved its worth during the crossing of the Irrawaddy River, where Canadian Flight Lieutenant Henry Avery earned a Military Cross on the night of Feb. 24-25, 1945.

An unknown number of Canadian merchant ships


plied Far Eastern waters throughout the war. Japanese attacks sunk 17.

Also serving in Burma, Malaya and Sarawak were 40 Japanese-Canadian and Chinese-Canadian linguists as part of Special Operation Executive's paramilitary organization Force 136. Their service helped influence the Canadian government to extend full rights of citizenship to the nation's Chinese and Japanese communities by 1950.

As the war in Europe ended in May 1945, the cruiser HMCS *Uganda* arrived in the Pacific theatre to support the American invasion of the Japanese island of Okinawa. The 82-day battle that ended on June 22, 1945, was the Pacific War's bloodiest, with an estimated 241,000 lives lost—including almost 150,000 Okinawan civilians.

These massive military and civilian losses helped convince President Harry Truman to authorize the atomic bombings. On Aug. 9, the same day Nagasaki was struck by the second bomb, RCAF Lieutenant Robert Hampton Gray from Trail, B.C., led eight Corsair fighter-bombers to target Japanese shipping in Honshu's Onagawa Bay. Despite his plane being badly damaged by anti-aircraft fire, the 27-year-old pilot pressed home his attack on a destroyer—sinking it with one 500-pound bomb. His plane then plunged into the sea. Gray was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross. He was the last Canadian to die in Second World War combat.

Hostilities ended six days later. The news arrived in North America on the evening of Aug. 14, and immediately thousands of people spilled into the streets in jubilant celebration. Toronto's downtown streets were jammed with a sea of humanity. It was the same in every Canadian community. After six years of war, peace had come at last. **LM**



An officer with the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve examines the papers of a Japanese-Canadian fisherman in Steveston, B.C., in December 1941.

FACETOFACE

ON

Should the **CANADIAN GOVERNMENT** have **AUTHORIZED THE FORCIBLE EVACUATION INLAND OF JAPANESE CANADIANS** during the Second World War?

Author J.L. Granatstein says **YES**. Author Pamela Sugiman says **NO**.

.....

Granatstein has written dozens of books, including *Who Killed Canadian History?* and *Canada's Army: Waging War and Keeping the Peace*. He is a former director and CEO of the Canadian War Museum. **Sugiman** is a professor and chair of the Department of Sociology at Ryerson University and former director of the national executive board of the National Association of Japanese Canadians.

To voice your opinion on this question, go to www.legionmagazine.com or e-mail editor@legion.ca

PORTRAIT ILLUSTRATIONS BY TERRY SHOFFNER



J.L. GRANATSTEIN

YES.

Kong and Malaya were widely reported to have assisted Tokyo's attacking military. Moreover, Tokyo regarded all overseas Japanese, regardless of where they

were born, as Japanese citizens subject to the Emperor's orders.

Canadian-born Japanese, the Nisei, were in an uncomfortable position. From well before the outbreak of war in the Pacific, Japan's armies had been waging aggressive war in China. The English-language Nisei paper, *The New Canadian*, deliberately tried to counter "this vociferous anti-Japanese feeling" by publishing photo sections, presumably supplied by the Japanese consulate in Vancouver, praising Japan's war effort. This was completely legitimate while Canada and Japan were at peace, but to many

ALL THIS WAS AN OUTRAGEOUS VIOLATION OF THE CIVIL LIBERTIES OF CANADIANS. BUT, TO REPEAT, THERE WAS A WAR ON.

officials and B.C. residents, it looked very different after Pearl Harbor.

In February 1941, American code breakers had intercepted orders, subsequently passed to the government in Ottawa, directing the Japanese consulate to recruit spies from Japanese nationals and Nisei and to use them to ferret out information on B.C.'s defences. But if hard intelligence was being collected and passed to Tokyo, no one knew, because the Canadian intelligence services were pathetically unprepared to find out.

In B.C., the military had only two officers who spoke Japanese

and one who could barely read it. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police and provincial police had one Japanese linguist between them, and he was swamped. Without the ability to reach into the local community, without the capacity to secure hard information, concerns festered and suspicion grew.

In these circumstances, events followed a seemingly inevitable course. Days after Pearl Harbor, fishing boats, radios and weapons owned by people of Japanese origin were seized. On January 14, 1942, Ottawa ordered all male Japanese nationals aged 18 to 45 moved inland, and in February, faced with mounting public pressure, orders came to move all persons of Japanese origin—men, women and children, citizens and non-citizens alike—to makeshift town sites well inland. Several hun-

dred Japanese nationals and Nisei who resisted the evacuation or were adamant supporters of Japan ended up in an internment camp in Northern Ontario. Ottawa then seized Japanese-Canadian property and sold

it off at fire sale prices, compounding racism with what amounted to government-authorized theft.

All this was an outrageous violation of the civil liberties of Canadians. But, to repeat, there was a war on, and Canada and its allies were losing. A tightly knit group of Japanese Canadians, isolated from their fellow citizens by language and culture, aroused public fear, particularly in British Columbia, and the government believed it had to respond. The evacuation of Japanese Canadians inland was wrong, but in early 1942, it was necessary. **LM**

NO ONE TODAY believes that the civil liberties of Canadians should ever be rudely violated. We bristle at the idea, and so we should. But Canada is (nominally) at peace in 2015; in 1942, however, we were at war, and the enemy was winning.

In Europe, the Germans were at the gates of Moscow and Leningrad, controlled all of Western Europe, and close to taking North Africa. Japan had attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, destroying much of the United States Navy's Pacific Fleet. The British Crown Colony of Hong Kong—including its 2,000 Canadian defenders—fell on Christmas Day, and British Malaya, the Philippines and the Dutch East Indies soon would follow. Many feared that Japan would invade Hawaii and strike at the West Coast of the United States and Canada. The fear in British Columbia was palpable, and the government in Ottawa, hitherto focused on defending Britain and the Atlantic, faced serious problems.

One such problem was our 23,000 Japanese Canadians. Fishermen, market gardeners, ordinary men and women living in peace—or a potential fifth column waiting to assist the invaders? Suspicion ran high in B.C., and almost all politicians, newspaper editors and military brass feared the worst. They had some reason. Japanese living in Hawaii, Hong

NO.

PAMELA SUGIMAN



THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S internment of Canadians of Japanese ancestry profoundly transformed the lives of many. For Japanese Canadians, it resulted in enduring losses, some irreparable: the loss of citizenship rights, privacy and dignity, opportunity, property and possessions, community and culture. So potent were the racist beliefs that guided the internment that more than 70 years later, we continue to debate its legitimacy.

For Japanese Canadians, people who had chosen Canada as a land in which to raise children, work and save, start small businesses—in short, carve out new lives—the internment was an assault on human dignity and a violation of the rights of citizenship. The second-generation Nisei, most of whom were born and grew up in urban and agricultural communities in British Columbia (for example, the Powell Street area of Vancouver; the fishing village of Steveston; the farming community in Haney) felt betrayed by a country they now called home, an acute awareness of their ‘foreignness,’ and a demoralizing lesson in the precariousness of citizenship. Their first-generation parents, the Issei, suffered significant material losses and uncertainty about the fate of their families.

For me, a third-generation Japanese-Canadian Sansei, the forced exile is not simply a historical blemish recorded in a textbook. Rather, it is a deeply personal issue, one that I have lived with all of my life: memories of uprooting, internment, resettlement and forced assimilation have been passed on from generation to generation. For my parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles, as well as 23,000 other Japanese Canadians,

the internment, broadly defined, encompassed a range of violations, including confinement in former stables, separation of families, registration with Canadian government officials, curfews, incarceration in prisoner-of-war camps, relocation to ramshackle housing in the British Columbia interior and, ultimately, ‘repatriation’ of 4,000 individuals to Japan, a country that was foreign to most Canadian-born citizens of Japanese origin.

In 1988, Prime Minister Brian Mulroney signed the Japanese Canadian Redress Agreement. As part of this, the prime minister publicly acknowledged the wrongful way in which the government had treated Japanese Canadians during the war years, provided symbolic individual and community compensation packages, and committed to support collective national anti-racist initiatives in future years. From this, the Canadian Race Relations Foundation opened in 1997.

Longstanding myths that Japanese Canadians had posed a national security threat and that they were interned for their own protection from racist B.C. residents have long been dispelled. Comprehensive historical analyses, based on careful archival documentation and oral history interviews with non-Japanese Canadians who resided in the communities that witnessed the internment, uncover no proof of a security threat. Indeed, most Japanese Canadians made tireless efforts to prove they were loyal and hard-working citizens. Despite

a long history of blatant anti-Asian prejudice and discrimination in B.C. and beyond, there were also white neighbours, classmates, co-workers, employers, missionaries and even RCMP guards who established longstanding friendships with Japanese Canadians in their midst.

The assumption of an individual's national loyalties on the basis of presumed race rather than citizen-

ship and culture, is fundamentally flawed. To maintain that a blatantly racist action is fair and just because it is legal (or sanctioned by the state) is equally problematic. To dis-

possess communities that have been “framed by race,” as the scholar and activist Roy Miki put it, has little to do with protection. When Canada's Custodian of Enemy Property confiscated and resold fishing boats, farms, houses, sewing machines, dishes and family treasures, it had no bearing on ‘protection’ against racism.

Time has a way of healing wounds, of mixing memory and nostalgia, but I still maintain that Japanese Canadians should not have been interned. A democratic country must uphold the rights of its citizens. We cannot impute political sentiment and motive on the basis of race. We must learn from such historical injustices, deepen our understanding of racism in this country, and work toward transformative change. **LM**

THE FORCED EXILE IS NOT
SIMPLY A HISTORICAL
BLEMISH RECORDED IN A
TEXTBOOK. RATHER, IT IS A
DEEPLY PERSONAL ISSUE.

CRACKS IN THE SYSTEM

A litany of complaints about Veterans Affairs Canada's treatment of veterans has led to a 'veterans' revolt.' Can new leadership at VAC inspire a culture shift, or should the system be rebuilt from the ground up?

BY SHARON ADAMS AND ADAM DAY
PHOTOGRAPHY BY LOUIE PALU

I KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE to feel the wind on your brain," says retired corporal Bruce Moncur.

He was part of the Canadian contingent in Operation Medusa on Sept. 4, 2006, intent on routing the Taliban from Afghanistan's Panjwaii district, about 40 kilometres west of Kandahar. He was eating breakfast with a buddy, cold beans and wieners, when two American A-10 Thunderbolt jets mistakenly opened fire on the Canadian platoon. Private Mark Anthony Graham was killed. Moncur, then 22, was one of 30 wounded, hit in the head by a 30-mm explosive armour-piercing bullet.

"I remember being tossed in the air...feeling like I was being electrocuted." He passed out. When he came to, his right arm was flopping around like a fish on the ground. He checked his arms and legs, was relieved they were still connected to his body. Then he felt blood pouring down his face. "I panicked. I'm catching it in my hands. I'd get a handful, overflowing, and I'd drop it." He knew he was in deep trouble.

Unable to lift his head, Moncur crawled to a buddy for help. "He turned away and I heard him whispering, 'Oh, my God. How do you treat an exposed brain?' I remember thinking 'This is it.' I started sending messages, like telepathic messages, 'I love you'...praying that somehow, some way, those messages were going to get home"

BRUCE MONCUR

The scar along retired corporal Bruce Moncur's part line is now barely distinguishable, but the wound that caused it cost five per cent of his brain—and changed his life forever. Moncur was among those medevaced from the scene of a friendly-fire incident (SEE PAGE 32) in Afghanistan in 2006.





to Windsor, Ont., to his aunt, who had raised him, and his brother. “And then I gave up and said, ‘I’m just going to die in peace on the top of this Afghan mountain.’”

But Moncur didn’t die. He was airlifted to Kandahar, underwent his first brain surgery, and began navigating the exquisite depths of pain. “I felt my heartbeat in my brain, and each heartbeat—there are like, 60 a minute—was absolutely excruciating, mind-blowing,” an agony often not defeated even by morphine.

When Moncur rose from his hospital bed back in Canada to begin rehabilitation, more than five per cent of his brain had been removed. “I’d look at English literature, and...it looked like Chinese. My speech was slurred. I needed a walker. It was very scary.” He didn’t know if he’d ever be able to live independently again.

Nine months of intensive therapy helped Moncur regain the ability to speak, to walk, to read. Years after the event, he was diagnosed with, and received a disability award for, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

After nine years, he still has a lump of metal the size of a water bottle cap buried in his brain, too deep to

safely remove. He has bad headaches, dozens a year. Loss of short-term and long-term memory has him living in a constant confusion of missed appointments, forgotten names, late arrivals, laundry forgotten in the washer until it starts to stink. Symptoms from the head wound provoke frustration and anger, which triggers his PTSD.

Then there’s the fatigue. Two hours of concentration leaves him feeling like he’s just run a marathon, and it takes hours of rest to recover.

In 2008, Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) gave Moncur a 10-per cent disability assessment for his head wound, and sent him a cheque for \$22,000.

“It was a slap in the face,” he says. “I was given a single cheque, no explanation. I reached the startling conclusion that five per cent of a soldier’s brain is worth a mere \$22,000.”

VAC’s table of disabilities, which Moncur calls the “meat chart,” has assessments for loss of eyes, ears, arms and legs—but not for loss of a piece of the brain.

Moncur’s nine-year battle over that assessment ended

TIMELINE

TRACING THE TROUBLED RECENT HISTORY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS CANADA



ALBINA GUARNIERI
(LIBERAL)
JULY 20, 2004 TO
FEB. 5, 2006

2005

MAY 2005 New Veterans Charter (NVC) legislation is passed after scant debate

MAY 2005 Retired captain Sean Bruyey holds a press conference denouncing the NVC

MAY 2005 Bruyey’s privacy first breached



GREG THOMPSON
(CONSERVATIVE)
FEB. 6, 2006 TO
JAN. 16, 2010

2006

MARCH 2006 Harper staff asks Bruyey to hold off on a news conference criticizing the NVC

MARCH 2006 VAC shares Bruyey’s private medical and financial information again

APRIL 2006 NVC comes into effect

in mid-January, a couple of weeks after air force veteran Erin O'Toole, Member of Parliament for Durham, Ont., replaced the beleaguered Julian Fantino as Minister of Veterans Affairs. Between his earlier \$134,000 PTSD award and awards for his head wound, Moncur now has received 100 per cent of the disability award available under the New Veterans Charter (NVC). Often called the lump sum payment, it is a one-time, tax-free cash award in recognition of pain and suffering, capped at \$306,698 this year. Moncur is among those who do not believe the sudden settlement of their grievances immediately after O'Toole's appointment is coincidence.

Those skeptics also greeted a recent series of announcements sweetening NVC benefits as a political move timed to buy them off or shut them up; a move made not because veterans were in trouble, but because politicians are.

This election year follows a nadir in the relationship between VAC and the men and women it serves. Faith in the federal Conservative Party, the traditional pro-military party, has also curdled. Veterans and the serving military—and their supporters—cannot be counted on to vote as a bloc.

Loud and cranky veterans—and some VAC employees—are ratcheting up campaigns for change. The Equitas Disabled Soldiers Funding Society has launched a class-action lawsuit against the federal government (in abeyance at press time pending settlement discussions), claiming those served by the *Pension Act* got a better deal than modern NVC veterans. Disgruntled veterans have thrown themselves into what they call the ABC election campaign—Anything But Conservative. The Union of Veterans Affairs Employees is working to swing votes to other parties in a couple of dozen ridings decided by small margins in the last federal election.

It will take a lot to earn back the respect of veterans who feel betrayed by the system meant to serve them. O'Toole believes he has already made a good start with Bill C-58, the *Support for Veterans and Their Families Act*, which addresses the most serious concerns of veterans and their advocates about the NVC, though perhaps

not always to the desired degree. He says he is reforming practices, co-operating with the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) to smooth transition from military to veteran life, and setting his sights on continual improvement in programs and services. O'Toole promises to make the department “veteran-centric.”

“Everyone who works in my department has a mandate to think of the veteran and their family in everything they do, whether developing policy, looking at programs...or writing a letter to a veteran,” says O'Toole. Being veteran-centric “shows we're actually concerned about their wellness. This can't be a bureaucratic labyrinth they have to go through to get benefits.”

Historically, there is no denying that VAC has helped better the lives of hundreds of thousands of veterans and their families. And veterans—even the disgruntled ones—praise the hard work and dedication of front-line staff. The department now serves more than 200,000 military and RCMP veterans and families, and 90 per cent of its projected \$3.5 billion budget is spent on services and benefits. Thousands more will be helped by Bill C-58. [At press time, the bill had been incorporated into the omnibus budget bill, expected to pass before Parliament adjourned.]

But some fed-up veterans believe the recent political polish is actually poppycock. Ministers come and go, policies change, but the bureaucracy grinds ever on. They are angry that it took media attention to settle some cases, and that those individual fixes don't solve the problem for those who don't, or can't, make as loud a noise.

These discontented veterans don't believe recent changes will fix what's really ailing the department—an adversarial system with a skeptical application and appeals process that chews up the very veterans most in need of help and least able to negotiate on their own its complex demands.

They believe the system for taking care of Canada's wounded warriors is cracked, possibly broken—and they're laying it on Prime Minister Steven Harper's doorstep.

Over the decade since the New Veterans Charter was introduced, news headlines have captured veterans' growing discontent with how gaps in benefits have been addressed and how they themselves have been treated.

2007

MARCH 2007 Veteran Dennis Manuge launches a class-action lawsuit over disability-benefit clawbacks

2007 Bruyee starts checking his internal VAC documents prior to filing complaint with the Privacy Commissioner

2008

MARCH 2008 Minister Thompson says end to clawbacks unlikely

SEPTEMBER 2006 Bruyee's mental health is discussed in the Prime Minister's Office

SEPTEMBER 2007 Veterans criticize eligibility and amount of \$20,000 *ex gratia* payments to soldiers exposed to Agent Orange at CFB Gagetown in 1966 and 1967

NOVEMBER 2007 Pat Stogran named first Veterans Ombudsman

SPRING 2008 Senate report says variations in provincial health-care plans mean wounded soldiers receive unequal treatment



ADVERSARIAL ROOTS

The NVC was drawn up by a Liberal government and had the support of all parties before becoming law in 2006. But it was under the Conservative government that the gaps became obvious and it is this government that has dragged its heels, making changes only twice in the past decade, despite assurances the law would be updated as needed. Harper appointed one minister, Greg Thompson, on whose watch veterans' privacy was breached when they opposed government policy, and another, Fantino, whose personal style was so badly matched to the portfolio that he outright riled veterans. And it is clearly a Conservative strategy to make political hay out of veterans' issues in the months leading up to the federal election.

In 2012, Harper spoke at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, explaining how Canada outperformed most industrialized countries during the recent financial crisis, not by creating permanent programs and government bureaucracy, but with "targeted and temporary" economic stimulus, investments in infrastructure, training, and support to workers who lost their jobs.

Is it coincidence, he asked, that the financial crisis revealed not just too much national debt, but "too much general willingness to have standards and benefits beyond our ability or even willingness to pay for them?"

Veterans might ask if it is a coincidence that the permanent programs and government bureaucracy that have supported ill, injured and disabled veterans for most of the past century would be replaced by "targeted and temporary" supports to transition all but the most severely disabled veterans into civilian life, such as the one-time payment in recognition of their pain and suffering.

Or, as some veterans see it, a kiss-off for life.

The roots of the adversarial system can be traced to post-war pressure to take better care of Second World War veterans than those of

PAT STOGAN

Retired colonel Pat Stogan (OPPOSITE), who lives with chronic pain and post-traumatic stress disorder, takes solace from his dog, Apollo. Stogan (ABOVE) takes a breather during Operation Apollo in Afghanistan in 2002.



the First World War. The federal government set up programs to help veterans resume their civilian lives and to pay for treatment and long-term support of the disabled. With a million possible clients, it made sense to set the eligibility bar high, ensuring those in the greatest need received services, while weeding out fraudsters.

What evolved was a complex system to determine who is eligible and how much support they are entitled to, and an elaborate appeal process for anyone who wants to challenge the department's decisions.

The system is too complex, with a high burden of proof on the veteran, says Veterans Ombudsman Guy Parent. "The transition from DND to VAC should be a path; right now it's a wall." Today's pool of veterans is smaller, so eligibility barriers could be lowered and skeptical attitudes jettisoned.

"Employment Insurance and the Canada Revenue Agency ask you to provide information, you provide

TIMELINE

MAY 2008 The Canadian House of Commons Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs makes a dozen recommendations to simplify VAC processes and extend benefits

JUNE 2009 Two veterans return their medals in protest of clawbacks to the Service Income Security Insurance Plan (SISIP) payments

VACANT

JAN. 16, 2010 TO
JAN. 19, 2010



JEAN-PIERRE BLACKBURN (CONSERVATIVE)
JAN. 19, 2010 TO
MAY 18, 2011

SEPTEMBER 2008 \$24,000 payment for "eligible" veterans exposed to nuclear radiation is not enough, say veterans

2009

FEBRUARY 2009 Veterans Ombudsman finds the Funeral and Burial Assistance program has not kept up with rising costs

OCTOBER 2009 the New Veterans Charter Advisory Group report identifies gaps

2010

SEPTEMBER 2010 Brueya launches lawsuit for breach of privacy

it, you get the benefits. Then they audit,” says Parent. VAC could do something similar.

“We have a duty to the veteran and to society to make sure we have a fair, quick, less-stressful system,” says O’Toole, “but one that is evidence-based.” People develop non-service-related illnesses before and during their military careers, he points out, which are covered by the public health care system, but VAC requires evidence of *service-related* injury or illness.

Despite regulations calling for veterans to receive the benefit of the doubt, the application and assessment system requires upfront proof every step of the way. Instead, the benefits system should be “open, simple and generous,” and focused on veterans’ needs, says Parent, but to get there requires a change in VAC culture.

Canada’s servicemen and servicewomen are steeped in the country’s highest values—and we demand they uphold them. “Duty, honour, loyalty, it’s bred into them,” says Gary Walbourne, Ombudsman for the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces. Yet their honesty is questioned the moment they apply for benefits. This may pass the notice of the majority whose claims are approved without a hiccup—more than 70 per cent of VAC’s annual 40,000 first-time claims receive “favourable” decisions—that is, at least part of the claim is accepted, though perhaps not to the desired degree. But to those of the remaining 30 per cent subjected to the rejection and appeals process, VAC’s skepticism can be humiliating—and infuriating.

Retired corporal Shane Jones, who lives near Halifax, had been treated for PTSD before being sent to Afghanistan in 2005, where a military vehicle rollover broke his skull and injured his brain. He was medevaced to Canada, and later also diagnosed with a herniated spinal disc and sciatic nerve damage, which has left him in chronic pain. But his applications for disability pensions for head and back injuries were

“THE TRANSITION FROM DND TO VAC SHOULD BE A PATH; RIGHT NOW IT’S A WALL.”

— VETERANS
OMBUDSMAN
GUY PARENT

initially rejected because, as he says VAC put it, “there is not enough evidence to support that your injuries happened overseas in a special duty area.” “I lost it,” says Jones. “For God’s sake, it was all over the news.”

Since then, he has gone from one fight with VAC to another—appealing eligibility, appealing assessments, appealing retroactivity—appearing four times before the Veterans Review and Appeal Board. And he has called VAC. He has called VAC a lot. And he has called VAC a lot of bad names. “Every single time something went wrong, I had to stand up and fight for myself,” says Jones. “I had to put my face in the media. I don’t like that. Now my family is

finally financially taken care of.”

After 10 years of appeals, Jones now receives a total of \$5,500 monthly from VAC, which includes *Pension Act* allowances and monthly amounts for support of his wife and children. He also receives a small military pension and Service Income Security Insurance Plan (SISIP) long-term disability payments. His most recent battle, over reimbursement for a prescription, was settled days after he made a critical comment on the minister’s website.

Jones and Moncur have struggled with the system for years, and it’s easy to see how such battles can be life-shattering—an accumulation of anger and frustration that can break the spine of a marriage, turn someone into a basement-dweller, raise thoughts of suicide.

THE REBEL COMMANDER

“I’m concerned about the 10 or 15 per cent whose lives have been shattered,” says Pat Stogran, a retired colonel of the Princess Patricia’s Canadian Light Infantry who led the first Canadian troops into Afghanistan in 2002. He was also Canada’s first Veterans Ombudsman.

Stogran also served as a United Nations observer in

TIMELINE

OCTOBER 2010 Benefits announced for veterans with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), days after the disease claims advocate Brian Dyck

OCTOBER 2010 VAC launches mandatory privacy awareness program



STEVEN BLANEY
(CONSERVATIVE)
MAY 18, 2011 TO
JULY 15, 2013

MARCH 2011 Parliamentary report projects 2,750 cases of PTSD and 5,900 mental-health cases from Afghanistan mission

OCTOBER 2010 The Privacy Commissioner finds VAC violated Bruyey’s privacy, suspects systemic problem, orders audit

NOVEMBER 2010 Pat Stogran replaced by Guy Parent as Veterans Ombudsman

2011

MARCH 2011 Reprimands and three-day suspensions for VAC staff who violated Bruyey’s privacy dismissed by critics as “slap on wrist”

OCTOBER 2011 Veterans Ombudsman identifies gaps left after amendments to NVC

Bosnia, where he was credited with saving thousands of lives by preventing a 1994 massacre in Gorazde—and was undeservedly discredited for how he did it. He went over the head of a British commanding general to request that NATO use air power to stop an invasion. Stogran says his PTSD is rooted in a subsequent smear campaign, and a feeling of betrayal by his own chain of command.

Appointed to a three-year term as ombudsman in 2007, Stogran had a short honeymoon. He aired his disagreements with bureaucrats in the media. In 2009, he told the House of Commons Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs that department bureaucrats had denied him access to information he believed he needed to pursue his mandate to look into systemic issues. He criticized the bureaucracy for its “insurance-company mentality,” and politicians for stinginess over benefits. Veterans empathized with his frustration and applauded when he “went rogue” after hearing that his appointment would not be renewed. Today, as leader of the online Rebel Gorilla Army (rebelgorillas.ca), Stogran continues to fight for veterans’ causes in podcasts. “I can be a catalyst for everyone’s change,” he says on the website.

Stogran’s departure in 2010 arguably seeded the veterans’ revolt (November/December 2014). Consultation and negotiation, the tried-and-true tactics of traditional veterans’ organizations led by The Royal Canadian Legion, was too slow a process for some, who decided to take action themselves. They protested Stogran’s loss, inaction on changes to the NVC, and funding cuts. They organized what has become an annual national protest rally. And they’ve created new advocacy organizations, including Moncur’s Afghanistan Veterans Association of Canada.

Moncur and Stogran are two leaders of the veterans’ revolt—a revolt involving many splinter groups, with many prominent voices but no single indisputable leader. These veterans have paid their dues in bone and blood and mental health and they insist on being heard on their own terms, unmindful of political correctness. Critics have said these rebels are unrepresentative of the majority, and dismiss their behaviour as irrational, intemperate, impulsive and impatient.

The same wounds for which these veterans are hailed as heroes also leave a legacy of symptoms that opens them up to such criticism.

Because they have so many voices, so many watchful eyes, the rebels have been able to track—and criticize—every step in the fight for changes to the NVC and every cut that has squeezed budgets or downsized the department.

DOWNSIDED, AND LESS PERSONAL

At first blush, downsizing VAC seemed a no-brainer—the workload would wane dramatically with the number of traditional veterans. That has not proved to be the case so far. Between 2009 and 2014, VAC’s client load declined just over eight per cent; it lost 32,930 traditional veterans, but picked up 21,315 modern veterans.

A lot of those new cases are more complex, too. Improvements in battlefield medicine and trauma care have increased the number of soldiers who survive horrific wounds—and go on to live with severe disabilities. As well, operational stress injuries have been added to the benefits mix. Veterans with mental health issues increased from under two per cent of VAC clients in 2002 to almost 12 per cent in 2014. This trend is expected to continue.

Modern veterans’ attitudes are different from those of traditional veterans, whose values were shaped in the frugal and more religious years of the Great Depression, before fruition of Canada’s social security net. Truly thankful and ever mindful of the needs of others, they worry that the more they claim, the less there is for others.

Military service today is seen as a long-term career, in addition to an honourable duty. Modern veterans matured in a more litigious society. Computer savvy, they go to the VAC website to consult the table of disabilities, as did Moncur and Jones. They are also products of a more cynical age, where the Internet ensures broken political promises are never forgotten, and positive spin on government announcements is shortly contrasted with in-depth criticism. Modern veterans are better informed, quicker to claim for benefits, and

DECEMBER 2011
Veterans Ombudsman calls on VAC to improve funeral and burial benefits

MARCH 2012
Federal budget announces austerity program

SEPTEMBER 2012
VRAB’s breach of privacy of member Harold Leduc is reported

OCTOBER 2012 The Auditor General reports that 25 per cent of veterans find the transition to civilian life difficult

NOVEMBER 2012 Military Ombudsman reports that inequities still exist in the treatment of wounded reservists since a 2008 report

2012

FEBRUARY 2012
Veterans Ombudsman calls on VAC to provide reasons for decisions

MAY 2012 Veterans Ombudsman says Veterans Review and Appeal Board (VRAB) fails to give veterans adequate benefit of the doubt

OCTOBER 2012 Veterans with the Equitas Disabled Soldiers Funding Society launch a lawsuit against the federal government, claiming veterans are not as well served by the NVC as they would have been by the *Pension Act*



inclined to claim every benefit to which they think they are entitled.

They are more politically savvy, more apt to protest publicly and air their opinions and grievances over social media. They've drawn a connection from the political goal of balancing the budget by 2015 and the policy of across-the-board cuts of five to 10 per cent in all federal departments to VAC staff cuts, office closures, longer processing times and less contact with staff.

The across-the-board cuts announced in 2012 affected VAC disproportionately since, as the department so often touts, 90 per cent of its budget is in mandated payments. "Only 10 per cent of the budget was for administration, including staffing," says Union of Veterans Affairs Employees national president Carl Gannon. "The cuts had to come from that 10 per cent."

"We have taken resources out of backroom administration, from bureaucracy," Harper told the House of Commons in December 2014. "We have put it into services." But media soon reported VAC's cutting of 10.1 per cent of jobs in internal services—"backroom" to most voters—versus a third of the positions in its disability-award program.

Between 2009 and 2014, while the number of VAC clients declined 8.2 per cent (from 218,596 to 200,644), more than 20 per cent of staff positions were cut. Nine of 32 district offices were closed, described as underused, including one in Windsor, which had 2,629 clients in 2012 and 10 staff, including three case managers and three client-service agents, according to Public Service Alliance of Canada figures.

JENNY MIGNEAULT AND CLAUDE RAINVILLE

Jenny Migneault comforts and supports her husband, retired sergeant Claude Rainville, and is in a battle herself for more support for families of disabled veterans.

To Moncur, closing the Windsor office is a betrayal. When the economic slump hit Windsor, he says, military recruitment ramped up. "So our unemployed sons and daughters

"IT IS TIME FOR A NEW SYSTEM. I THINK THIS ONE IS IRREPARABLE."

— NAVY VETERAN AND CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST JOHN WHELAN

joined up and went to war," says Moncur. "What was the thanks when they got back and needed help? The closure of their office. How underhanded, deceitful and gross."

Politicians have argued that veterans can now choose how they deal with the department—over the Internet, on the toll-free line or at 600 Service Canada locations across the country. For many, face-to-face service by someone knowledgeable about the benefits system is not one of the choices.

Employees on toll-free lines are not always familiar with complex

policies and are unfamiliar with your personal case, says Moncur. With the nearest VAC office now a two-hour drive away, he often uses the toll-free number. "First it was someone in Winnipeg and next time it was someone in Halifax. They say they'd look into it and get back to me. The phone call back was from somebody else. It was very impersonal. I felt like there wasn't anybody who really gave a damn."

On one occasion, he signed and sent in a release to allow his lawyer access to his files, and was told an appeal date would quickly be set. When he called several months later, he was told the signed release had been lost. Although the information had already been released to his lawyer, his case had been put on hold, without his knowledge, until he sent another signed release. The system, he says, "is heartless, faceless."

MORE PAPERWORK. FEWER PEOPLE

Just as political attitudes after the Second World War left their trail in departmental practices, so modern small-c conservative values—particularly that private business practices are more efficient and economical than publicly delivered services—are leaving a trail today.

Some services have been downloaded onto communities, advocacy groups and families. VAC is no longer

TIMELINE

2013

JANUARY 2013 The \$890-million Manuge clawback suit succeeds; benefits 7,000 veterans

JANUARY 2013 VAC report finds no link between exposure to depleted uranium and soldiers' illness

MARCH 2013 Senate Subcommittee on Veterans Affairs makes nine recommendations for improving the NVC

MAY 2013 Federal government announces it will not appeal the Manuge decision

JANUARY 2013 A Royal Canadian Legion letter-writing campaign is launched; results in increases to funeral and burial benefits

FEBRUARY 2013 Veterans Ombudsman finds the disability benefits application process is unfair

APRIL 2013 Veterans Ombudsman review of the NVC finds gaps in financial support to veterans over age 65 and assistance to families

a one-stop shop for veterans, but one of many resources. Advocacy groups are supplying more and more services that veterans once expected the department to provide. Legion service officers across the country report a dramatic increase in demand for their varied services. Legion service bureaus have recorded a 36 per cent increase in VAC benefit applications and departmental reviews on behalf of veterans from 2012 to 2014. Families are absorbing more, and without sufficient support, according to Jenny Migneault, who had to quit her own job to take care of her husband, Claude Rainville, who left a 20-year military career with physical injuries and PTSD.

The departmental goal of meeting client needs while controlling costs is reflected in its five-year transformation plan “to fundamentally change how VAC does its business.” This is to be supported by business planning, performance measures and timelines, in a method known as managerialism—the application of business procedures to running other organizations, particularly those not in the business of making a profit. Critics argue that VAC has transformed front-line workers’ jobs and guided focus away from veterans’ needs. Jobs have been reorganized and standardized to make them more efficient and positions have been cut to contain costs. Standardization of procedures and tracking of employees’ performance has increased the amount of paperwork and decreased face-to-face contact.

“There is not the type of interaction there was five years ago,” says Gerry Finlay, Legion provincial command service officer in Edmonton. “It’s all triaged now, centralized.”

A decade ago, a major part of the job of VAC area counsellors was conducting home visits to veterans within a defined geographic area, doing assessments and arranging for services. They have been replaced by client-service agents, who work mostly over the phone, and case managers, who cover larger areas, are now used only in complex cases, and whose caseloads are juggled in order to balance out workloads.

Nick (not his real name) is a 40-ish retired naval technician who lives in the Maritimes. He was in treatment for injuries to his back, neck, arm and shoulder when he was medically released with PTSD

two years ago, after serving two decades. He was assessed at five per cent disability for his back injury and received a cheque for part of the PTSD disability award. His claims for the other injuries were rejected.

“They said there wasn’t enough medical information” or evidence connecting the injury to service, although his military doctor made case notes. And surely, he says, there are records of the months he spent in physiotherapy for his neck, arm and shoulder injuries.

Two months after he left the navy, Nick had a back spasm that caused a heavy fall and he broke his neck. He shuffles slowly instead of walking, cannot move his head, is in obvious constant pain. He doesn’t want his name used because he is appealing several VAC decisions, including rejection of his application for the Veterans Independence Program, which helps pay for housework and yard work so disabled veterans can remain in their own homes.

A home visit would have revealed all this. Instead, his caseworker called to say he was being sent more forms. “I said, ‘I can’t fill this in. I cannot look down at the paper.’”

At least 100 full-time permanent caseworkers and 100 disability benefits staff, temporary and permanent, are being hired to tend to the backlogs created by the deep cuts, O’Toole announced in April. Skeptical veterans worry that the jobs were eliminated at one stroke of the pen, brought back by another, so what’s to prevent them disappearing again after the election? Some of the disability benefit jobs are temporary to deal with the backlog, says O’Toole, but the case managers are permanent additions. They will be allocated to where they are most needed, and all caseloads are to be cut from 40 to 30.

Despite this positive news, case managers are still assigned only complex cases. As veterans’ conditions improve, they fall off the list and could be overlooked if their conditions deteriorate. And caseloads are juggled to achieve balance, contributing to case manager turnover. Some veterans have lost count of how many case managers they’ve worked with.

With increased workloads and time pressures, caseworker communications tend to focus on the current problem, with less time to consider a veteran’s other—or future—needs. Veterans frequently complain they

TIMELINE



**JULIAN FANTINO
(CONSERVATIVE)**
JULY 15, 2013 TO
JAN. 5, 2015

AUGUST 2013 Veterans Ombudsman calls for improvements to vocational rehabilitation and assistance services

FALL 2013 Veterans and advocates loudly demand statutory review of the NVC

OCTOBER 2013 Federal government says in *Equitas* court case that it holds no special duty to veterans

NOVEMBER 2013 Statutory review of the NVC ordered

2014

2013

AUGUST 2013 Veterans Ombudsman reports that modern veterans are having difficulty finding nearby long-term care

SEPTEMBER 2013 Veterans Ombudsman says NVC failing some of the most severely disabled

OCTOBER 2013 Veterans Ombudsman criticizes lump-sum payment amount

NOVEMBER 2013 Veterans protest plans to close nine VAC service offices and divert veterans to Service Canada locations

have to know what to ask for, that VAC is not going to fill in the gaps.

“A classic example is reassessment,” says Legion service officer Finlay. The appeal process is explained in decision letters, but not the reassessment process. Veterans can have their conditions reassessed every two years, or earlier if there’s been deterioration, but they can appeal each decision only once. “I’ve seen a lot of people putting in an appeal,” says Finlay, when a reassessment could more quickly and easily make the difference in a ruling.

“I was about to waste my one appeal” in that way, says Moncur. “I didn’t understand the system, and nobody took the time to explain it to me.”

Social work professionals argue that the quality of services delivered cannot be judged by business standards. Humanity can’t be summed up in a tick box. What ends up being measured is not how well client needs are met, but how well the needs of the bureaucracy are.

Such micromanagement also raises the risk of a cover-your-ass mentality, Stogran points out. If an employee’s performance is judged on meeting goals, one of which is cost containment, it might be tempting to make assessments that are low enough not to spark criticism or review of their work, but which would drive veterans into the appeal process.

Inflexible business practices can lead to pettifoggery, too. VAC quibbled over an 82-year-old veteran’s mileage claim, saying it would reimburse for the shortest route to a medical appointment, along a new highway which the veteran felt unsafe driving, rather than his usual 24-kilometre route. “That’s the culture,” says Parent, “People questioning what is the cheapest way.” It’s fine for the needs of the organization, but veterans need some flexibility.

The Auditor General’s 2014 report on veterans’ mental health services reveals the dichotomy in viewpoint between VAC and veterans. The department’s performance-standard goal is to turn around 80 per cent of benefits applications within 16 weeks. But from the veterans’ perspective, it takes twice as long—32 weeks—to receive an eligibility decision, the report says. The two parties start counting at different

**“WE HAVE TAKEN
RESOURCES OUT
OF BACKROOM
ADMINISTRATION,
FROM BUREAUCRACY.
WE HAVE PUT IT
INTO SERVICES.”**

— PRIME MINISTER STEPHEN HARPER

times—VAC when the application forms have been completed to its satisfaction, and veterans from the moment they first send in the forms.

The report noted that VAC had not analyzed issues from the veteran’s perspective to find and remove barriers. Nor had it analyzed successful reviews and appeals to spot changes that could reduce their number.

VAC “measures output, not outcome,” says Parent. For instance, “They know how many people went through the vocational program, but don’t know how many have gone into jobs they’ve trained for, and have stayed there.”

Remember, says Parent, “VAC is not selling a product. It is offering benefits that have been earned by people who have been injured.”

TIME FOR A NEW SYSTEM?

Despite VAC’s transformation program and amendments to the NVC, Halifax navy veteran and clinical psychologist John Whelan has seen no decrease in clients, nor a change in their beefs about the system. Whelan served as clinical director for the CAF addiction-treatment programs before opening a private clinic for the treatment of complex military

JANUARY 2014 Minister Fantino has a confrontation with veterans, apologizes

APRIL 2014 Senator Romeo Dallaire says he is “pissed off” by Conservative MPs complaining that veterans cost too much

MAY 2014 Fantino defends \$4 million ad campaign

JUNE 2014 Outraged veterans plan protests on Parliament Hill demanding legislation spell out the moral obligation of Canada to its veterans

JUNE 2014 Senate Subcommittee on Veterans Affairs report makes 14 recommendations to improve transition of veterans to civilian life

FEBRUARY 2014 Military Ombudsman says some soldiers given medical discharges find they don’t qualify for benefits because VAC uses more stringent criteria than DND

MAY 2014 Fantino is filmed apparently ignoring an angry wife of a veteran asking him questions

JUNE 2014 The House of Commons Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs statutory review of the NVC makes 14 recommendations to improve the NVC

PTSD in 2004. “It is time for a new system,” he says. “I think this one is irreparable.”

Veterans still suffer culture shock when they are handed off to VAC, says Whelan. They come with emotional baggage. They are apprehensive about the future, in emotional and/or physical pain, and dealing with life-altering disabilities. Many feel betrayed. They arrive at VAC exhausted, and are plunged into the frustratingly complex application and appeal system, irksome delays and infuriating skepticism. Some vent their anger, not realizing that many people equate anger with violence.

Reams of paperwork have to be filled out—by veterans, doctors and therapists. Whelan came to realize that “our role for VAC was about substantiating claims, identifying who’s eligible for a particular program... [and] ferreting out malingerers. As clinicians, this is not what we’re about.”

Starting in about 2010, he noted something odd: after a year of therapy, instead of expected improvements, veterans “would come off the rails, go off their meds, go crazy. We were kind of scratching our heads, and said, ‘What the hell is happening here?’” Then veterans started bringing in “a ream of paperwork” and said they’d gotten a small portion of their disability award, and that the rest would come after reassessment. They were regressing in anticipation of their reassessment.

“If it’s truly an award for pain and suffering, shouldn’t that be [established] at the point of injury, not for residual damage? I saw it as a perversion,” says Whelan. “It was just too much for me, I said, ‘Nope, not doing this anymore.’” He communicated his concern to caseworkers and, about two years ago, stopped taking veterans who needed VAC assessments and concentrated on developing a PTSD group therapy program and research.

VAC declined requests for an interview with a subject-matter expert on questions of case management and disability awards.

THE REBEL PATH

Moncur can’t remember all the steps that led him to the rebel path. One came in 2013, when someone

at VAC explained that his claim had been classified with those of veterans suffering from headaches, and that maybe it could be moved up one more level. It was another affront.

“Apparently to Veterans Affairs, getting shot in the head in Afghanistan is the same as an office worker suffering headaches,” says Moncur. So he explained—again—his story: a battle wound, losing part of his brain, his long recuperation, chronic physical and neurological problems. He was sent “an encyclopedia of paperwork” to fill out, including a form with seven questions that took him six months—and 30 pages—to answer as completely as he could.

But Moncur clearly remembers the last step. He was one the veterans organized by the Public Service Alliance of Canada to go to Ottawa in January 2014 to plead with the minister not to close the nine district offices. It resulted in the now-infamous televised confrontation between Fantino and veterans.

The next day, Moncur went to the House of Commons to hear debate on the issue. He listened to opposition MPs argue for leaving the offices open. He happened to have a view of his own MP, Jeff Watson. “I watched him start heckling...that was the moment I wanted to be in politics. I had voted for him more than once. I wanted him to be fired. I wanted to help whoever was going to take his job. That was it, that was the moment when I said, ‘I am no longer a Conservative.’ They cannot make the next government.”

Moncur decided he would run for the NDP nomination in Windsor-Tecumseh, for retiring NDP MP Joe Comartin’s seat. He lost. The rebel’s path does not always lead to victory.

Moncur has gone through the medical and vocational rehabilitation programs, and received the maximum disability award. “I’ve utilized VAC to the fullest potential,” he says. When he left the military, he was in the officer-training program. He thinks by now he’d have made it to captain, with a salary between \$75,000 and \$98,000. Now, he needs the Earnings Loss Benefit to top up his salary to the minimum \$40,000 guaranteed under the NVC. He’ll require this benefit until, “I’m fully recovered—or make more money.” He would need a job that pays at least \$52,001, he says.

TIMELINE

AUGUST 2014 Ombudsman finds 48 per cent of permanently incapacitated veterans are not receiving the Permanent Impairment Allowance and supplement, and most who are are at its lowest level

JULY 2014 Statistics Canada reports suggest veterans transition is marked by health concerns, isolation and less money

OCTOBER 2014 Veterans Ombudsman and veterans advocates urge swift action on NVC review

NOVEMBER 2014 Media reports VAC returned \$1.13 billion in unspent funds

NOVEMBER 2014 Auditor General criticizes wait times to access mental-health services

DECEMBER 2014 Prime Minister Stephen Harper says VAC staff cuts come from administration; media reports follow showing they were veteran-services positions

With plans to go to law school on hold, Moncur is encouraged that VAC is hiring at least 100 more case managers. He has worked in Comartin's office, helping veterans process VAC claims. "I'd be a perfect test project to start hiring veterans as case managers. I ran it by them; we'll see. They've been receptive to a lot of things only to make a temporary measure of appeasement."

Meanwhile, he's working to support a change in the federal government. And if there's no change?

"The only thing that's going to make a difference is the Equitas lawsuit."

A WAY OUT OF THE QUAGMIRE

Discord over the NVC will continue, says retired brigadier-general Joe Sharpe, because there is a disconnect between veterans' expectations of how they will be supported if they are disabled and what politicians see as their obligation. Sharpe chaired the Croatia Board of Inquiry that investigated medical problems of returning peacekeepers in 1999.

Sharpe believes only a written covenant—not a preamble appended to a particular piece of legislation—will sort out the problem. A written promise enforceable by a court, it should provide the philosophical basis for all programs and benefits, and enshrine four pillars of veteran support: that veterans and their families will not lose financially or in quality of life due to duty-related disability; that they will be rehabilitated to the highest possible standard; that they will continue to fulfill their potential after rehabilitation; and that they and their families will be respected for their service and sacrifice.

The NVC still falls short of meeting those expectations, although after 10 years of hard work by veterans and their advocates, the more serious gaps identified in numerous reports have been addressed. But more gaps will appear, says Parent, because veterans' needs continually evolve.

"We have processes and procedures built up over the years that were probably required and needed at the time, but they've been layered upon and layered upon and layered upon," says DND/CAF Ombudsman Walbourne.

The NVC itself is a layering on of programs and benefits to make up for the *Pension Act's* deficiencies in serving modern veterans. It added programs, but uses similar processes to determine eligibility, assess disability severity and determine amounts of disability awards. The scrutiny is ingrained.

VAC is implementing changes, says O'Toole, which will let veterans and families know the system is "focused at giving them the benefit of the doubt or making it easier to get to yes."

Bill C-58's preamble says its purpose is "to recognize and fulfil the obligation of the people and Government of Canada to show just and due appreciation to members and veterans for their service to Canada" and that the act "shall be liberally interpreted so that the recognized obligation may be fulfilled."

"Liberally interpreted," says O'Toole, "means liberally construed and enforced. So I think more than ever before, the tremendous obligation we have to serve those who serve us is not just discussed, not just in speeches, historic or present. It's in Bill C-58, and we say that will mean liberal application going forward."

Sharpe feels the preamble is a step in the right direction, but that it stops short of what he sees as a social covenant. Some of the terminology leaves itself open to interpretation. For example, he says, "'Just and due appreciation' does not match with the soldier's unlimited liability. I see the use of limiting language as a legal precaution—much more suitable to a contract than a covenant."

Parent goes ever further. "Isn't it about time we have a charter for all veterans, not a New Veterans Charter, not the old *Pension Act*, but legislation that combines the best of both?"

Veterans and their advocates have won skirmishes, but the fight will rage on, for the battle goes beyond the NVC to a more fundamental question: what do we owe disabled veterans, and veterans in general?

Answers to that question vary widely, depending on generation, financial times, political viewpoints. But if fully supporting veterans is truly a sacred duty—a "recognized obligation"—of all Canadians, should it not be protected from the vagaries of politics and changing times by a written covenant? **LM**



ERIN O'TOOLE
(CONSERVATIVE)
JAN. 5, 2015 TO
PRESENT

FEBRUARY 2015 VAC subject of Rick Mercer rant over paperwork required of amputee

SPRING 2015 O'Toole makes series of announcements to improve benefits under NVC

APRIL 15, 2015 Media reports that VAC managers have been warning since 2009 that they would not have the capacity to serve clients if there were staff cuts

2015

JAN. 28, 2015 Media reveals government spent \$700,000 fighting the Equitas lawsuit

FEBRUARY 2015 Veterans Ombudsman reports significant progress on some recommendations made in 2012 to assure fair adjudication to veterans; other recommendations not implemented

MAY 2015 Settlement talks on Equitas lawsuit in abeyance

On April 23, Legion Magazine's editorial staff met with Minister of Veterans Affairs Erin O'Toole, Member of Parliament for Durham, for a discussion of issues related to Veterans Affairs Canada. What follows is a condensed version of the interview. For the complete version, go to www.legionmagazine.com/otoole.



Q&A

with Minister O'Toole

Legion Magazine: You frequently use the term “veteran-centric care.” One complaint we hear from veterans is that VAC has an insurance-company mentality, or that it’s bureaucracy-centric. Can you give us a sense of how you intend to change this systemically?

O'Toole: We have reminded everyone at Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC)—more than 3,000 employees, and not only the case managers who are serving veterans, but everyone who works in my department—that they have a mandate to think of the veteran and their family in everything they do, whether it’s developing policy, whether it’s looking at programs, such as the Veterans Independence Program (VIP) and others, to make sure they’re working, to make sure these programs are easy and focused on the well-being of the veteran. You are serving the men and women who have served us—and their families.

We set up a veteran-centric communications task force to ensure that the policy departments and the service departments are mindful of the fact that some of our front-facing letters are more than communication tools. I’ve talked to

families. They’re stressed when a manila envelope from VAC arrives at their house. That itself causes stress. Being veteran-centric means we must write in a way that’s easy to understand and shows we’re actually concerned about their wellness.

This can’t be a bureaucratic labyrinth they have to go through to get benefits. We’ve seen this with some veterans with permanent injuries, missing limbs, who have said that the forms upset them. Forms are needed, but can we eliminate some, or make the renewal periods longer, and is the language geared toward their wellness?

I go to Charlottetown regularly. I also bring veterans. I brought Chris Linford [author of *Warrior Rising: A Soldier’s Journey to PTSD and Back*] and his wife Kathryn to speak to hundreds of employees in the atrium about their struggle with post-traumatic stress disorder and the strain on the family. I want our people in Charlottetown to remember who we’re all serving. It’s been well received. The people who work for VAC are passionate to serve. They don’t want it to be a bureaucracy.

The insurance company example is a good one. I’d like to see some private-sector discipline to our

performance, because delays cause stress. This is about doing things in a way that veterans understand, that is focused on their wellness, that reduces stress, reduces administrative burden. We have worked with the Legion to get our disability claim forms down. We want to do that even more.

We find that one huge difference between our traditional war veterans and modern veterans is a higher incidence of people coming forward with mental-health injuries. It is good that they are coming forward, but those cases tend to be more complex. There is also an expectation, especially with Afghanistan veterans, who send something on their phone and they want a response in three seconds, right? Whereas I meet Second World War and Korean veterans all the time and they’re just, “Well, it’ll come,” because that’s the generation, when everything was by mail. Today, more and more young people are signing up for a My VAC Account and they want to manage their file. They want to see that instant input online, not by sending a letter or form. So what we have to do is modernize, streamline and make it easier for the veteran.

LM: The Veterans Ombudsman and the Auditor General have both criticized VAC for a lack of performance measurement and analysis aimed at improving approval rates and reducing appeals. How will you improve the measurement of performance of the VAC bureaucracy?

O'Toole: We have already made some strides. I think you're driving more at the Veterans Review and Appeal Board (VRAB). We're making some strides there and we'll continue to do that. If there are repeated issues going through appeals, we need to learn from that. The ombudsman and I have talked about that. We're putting more expertise on mental health and medical support within VAC. We now have a medical person who is our Surgeon General. We use that term to help show similarity with the forces.

We're also working with the Canadian Armed Forces to actually start the VAC process while the person is still in uniform. Before somebody who is injured is released 3(b) [on medical grounds], they tend to remain in uniform for three to five years. That's good, because they're getting 100 per cent salary. They're in the posting and location their families are comfortable with. They may be at the Joint Personnel Support Unit, but they're still within the military family they've known since they were 18 or 19, so this is all good for wellness.

Can we start VAC processing earlier? Can we start vocational rehabilitation earlier? We're looking at those things very, very closely. I have the Chief of Military Personnel at the table with me. Minister of National Defence Jason Kenney and I—DND and VAC—are working together, more than in generations, to address what we call the seam between the two departments.

In terms of claims reviews, we also have to deal with some myths out there: you will hear about someone being extremely frustrated with a denial. But more than 70 per cent of claims to VAC are accepted on the first instance. You wouldn't know that from some of the dialogue on Facebook. But we have a duty to the veteran and to society to make sure

“BEING VETERAN-CENTRIC MEANS WE NEVER WANT TO BE SATISFIED, EVEN WHEN WE HAVE PROGRAMS THAT ARE RUNNING WELL OR THAT WE HAVE IMPROVED.”

we have a fair, quick, less-stressful system, but one that is evidence-based. Because, for example, people in the Canadian Armed Forces, and ultimately veterans, represent a cross-section of Canadians, so there will be people who join the forces with pre-existing mental health issues. There will be people who develop cancer or other illnesses later in life that will not be related in any way to military service. But because Canadians develop cancer, multiple sclerosis, these sorts of things, we need our veterans and families to know that our system is fair, quick and focused at giving them the benefit of the doubt or making it easier to get to yes. But we still have to have an evidence-based, scientific process. So we're trying to make sure that we have expertise in that department, and increasingly, at the appeal-board level, so veterans can understand the process and see that it has been addressed.

I am also dealing with some of the myths that this is a very unfair system. We have to improve it, but more than 70 per cent of applications are accepted at first instance. When I tell some veterans that, they're flabbergasted because you only hear about the frustrating cases, but the vast majority are accepted. Veterans need to know that, probably alongside the United States, we have one of the most generous systems for review in the world. We're going to make it better and simpler, but we have a series of appeals through VRAB where we also provide Bureau of Pensions Advocates lawyers. So, we actually pay for a lawyer to challenge a claim that a veteran feels was not addressed at the department. I have attended a VRAB hearing, and it was very well done. They always end with the veteran having

the last word after review of the file, after discussion, so they don't leave without making final points.

I do think we have to make it work a little bit better, but I also have to say this is structured with the benefit of the doubt at the core of what we're doing.

LM: The preamble to Bill C-58 says its purpose is “to recognize and fulfil the obligation of the people and Government of Canada to show just and due appreciation to members and veterans for their service to Canada.” “Just and due” leaves room for interpretations that may limit access to VAC resources. In your view, what is the obligation of the government of Canada to those who are injured or wounded in military service?

O'Toole: Following my term as minister, I hope the quote people will remember 50 years from now is that we have a tremendous obligation to serve veterans, as well as to commemorate and remember. A lot of passion and energy have been expended on the question of our obligation.

You may have noticed as you walked in that I have a portrait of Sir Robert Borden in my office. He's my favourite prime minister; he visited the troops when he was in London for imperial conferences and he was deeply moved by it. But Borden never used the term ‘sacred obligation.’ That's why it's in the bill, and why we've said it will be liberally interpreted. Liberally interpreted means liberally construed and enforced. So I think more than ever before, the tremendous obligation we have to serve those who serve us is not just discussed, not just in speeches, historic or present. It's in Bill C-58, and we say that will mean liberal application going forward.

In politics, we get different parties saying, "I like veterans more." All parties do. That's why I say that the gaps in the New Veterans Charter (NVC) were unintended. When the Liberal Party brought the NVC forward after the Neary report [*Honouring Canada's Commitment: "Opportunity with Security" for Canadian Forces Veterans and Their Families in the 21st Century* by Peter Neary, chair of the Veterans Affairs Canada—Canadian Forces Advisory Council], they didn't intend this pre-65, post-65 issue that the ombudsman has flushed out [and which is addressed by the new Retirement Income Security Benefit].

These are unintended gaps, so let's fix them. Let's try and take some of the politics out of it. We all want to do well by our veterans, so that's why we put the obligation in the preamble. It's still creating conversation in the country. I think that's good, but I think more than ever we are making it a critical part of the reforms we're making VAC.

Being veteran-centric means we never want to be satisfied, even when we have programs that are running well or that we have improved. We should always be looking to revisit them, to say, "Is there more we can do here?" For example, has there been more learning on the psycho-social work being offered to support veterans in certain areas? Should we do a pilot program with service dogs? The Legion and other groups have found some good traction with them. We should always be striving.

LM: You recently announced the hiring of more than 100 new caseworkers and another 100 disability benefits staff for claims processing. Some veterans have told us they are concerned that some of those new positions will be cut after the election. Can you respond to their concern?

O'Toole: The concern is unfounded. In terms of case managers, those are permanent. Whether it's 160 or 180, we're looking at geographic allocation, because needs are different. Going from a one-to-40 case ratio to one-to-30 is important, but we also have to realize that a Korean War

veteran with VIP or a range of other issues or an addiction, or something like that, is not like someone with severe PTSD. We can't consider these cases interchangeable in terms of ratio. We have to ensure our case managers have the time and that they don't have burnout and fatigue.

On claims processing, there will be some temporary positions as part of our hiring, so it will likely be well in excess of 100, but some are going to be geared at getting the backlog down. This backlog is one that we actually asked the Auditor General to help us with. So if you ask the Auditor General, you know you're going to get a kick in the butt. That's what auditors general do.

What I like about the Prime Minister is that he wanted this because we're spending more on mental health, but are we getting the outcomes we want? The Auditor General said we're doing well on vocational rehabilitation, but where we were missing our marks was on claims processing and delays. Some of that is a backlog because of a higher number of mental-health claims, to be honest, so there will be a temporary aspect to get it down to a manageable level. Then the permanent ones, the long term, will help make sure that we meet the service objectives.

LM: You recently held a veterans' summit at the Canadian War Museum. There were no less than 25 veterans' organizations represented there. What are your views on the proliferation of all these veterans' organizations?

O'Toole: I think it's good in terms of the fact that there are people out there thinking and wanting to show support, like the True Patriot Love Foundation. Some might call that a veterans' organization or veterans' assistance. I think Canadians reconnected with their military and veterans as a result of Afghanistan and the Highway of Heroes. I represent a community along the Highway of Heroes, and I've stood on a bridge. This was a grassroots effort started by Legion members in Cobourg and Port Hope and Trenton. Firefighters,

cops, retired teachers—no government mandated it. The Canadian Armed Forces didn't say "be on the bridges." It was an organic movement. That was very special. Some people say that Canadians became patriotic again with the Vancouver Olympics. I say no, Canadians became patriotic again with the Highway of Heroes, when the rest of the world looked to us. In many ways, the Legion was at the core of that, at a grassroots, local-branch level. Canadians woke up and their passion and connection with the military was reignited. That has also led to more people wanting to help.

The other key thing has been social media. At my veterans' summit, we had two breakouts where we held working groups run by stakeholders. We had the traditional member-driven organizations, with the Legion as the leadership of that group, and then I had an online group, which I call online peer support. They don't have memberships, they don't have bylaws, they don't elect Tom Eagles or whomever. They're much looser. Some are angry and very political and not helpful, but they're very different from the Legion.

I renew my Legion membership every year on Remembrance Day. It's the way I remind myself. But we have to not squelch the online groups, because there are some amazing groups there, such as the Send Up the Count community on Facebook. There's a Facebook group called Veterans for a Strong Royal Canadian Legion. In fact, the guy running that site was my first ministerial commendation, Craig Hood. He is trying to get more young veterans to join the Legion. At the end of the summit, I tried to have these groups work together better.

I like to see these online peer supports, where younger veterans are happy and mad. They're all there on Facebook. Sometimes they dominate my Facebook page. Can we leverage that power of social networking? That instant reach?

This isn't going to happen overnight, but the fact that we ended the stakeholder summit in a very productive way—even the angry voices were shaking hands—I think is the first step in the journey. **LM**

BATTLE OF THE ATLANTIC



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BATTLE HONOURS

OF THE CANADIAN FORCES

Part 45: Second World War ITALY—TO THE SANGRO

By John Boileau

Battle Honours: ① Monte Camino ② Monte la Difensa-Monte la Rametanea ③ Castel di Sangro ④ The Sangro

Dates: ① Nov. 5-Dec. 9 ② Dec. 2-8 ③ Nov. 23-24 ④ Nov. 19-Dec. 3

Location: ① and ② south-central Italy, ③ and ④ east-central Italy

Units awarded: ① and ② Canadian Special Operations Regiment ③ West Nova Scotia Regt. ④ Royal 22e Rég't., Royal New Brunswick Regt. (Carleton & York), West Nova Scotia Regt.

After they had advanced to the Biferno River and captured a few towns on the far bank, the Canadians paused for a bit. By the end of October 1943, the Germans had withdrawn to the Sangro River and the British had relieved their Canadian counterparts. The Canadians moved into reserve for a well-deserved rest. It was needed; illness had replaced battle casualties as the main loss of manpower, with a sickness rate 16 times greater than normal.

Changes also occurred among some senior ranks. Christopher Vokes was promoted to major-general to succeed Guy Simonds, who had been selected to command 5th Canadian Armoured Division, which would soon arrive in theatre. He took with him his senior operations officer, George Kitching, who would command the new division's infantry brigade. Bert Hoffmeister, who had been acting commander of 2nd Brigade, was confirmed in that appointment and promoted to brigadier. Brigadier Graeme Gibson, who had been commanding 9th Brigade in Britain, took over command of 3rd Brigade, replacing the ineffectual Howard Penhale.

The imminent arrival of a corps headquarters and another division in Italy was the result of backroom politics in Canada and Britain. Senior political and military leaders in Canada were working to relieve General

Andy McNaughton of command of First Canadian Army in Britain and dispatch a second division and a corps headquarters to Italy, a prospect that was anathema to McNaughton. The British were not too happy about the idea either. The last thing they wanted in Italy was another corps headquarters, but they were prepared to accept one if the division that came with it was not an armoured one. Canada maintained it would have to be an armoured division.

Senior British staff had also argued that there was insufficient shipping to send more Canadians to Italy (or even bring back the forces that were there for the planned cross-Channel invasion), but pressure from the Canadian authorities resulted in the swap of a British corps headquarters and an armoured division for Canadian ones, leaving the equipment in place to be exchanged between the various units. Operation Timberwolf was launched in October to carry out this plan, but it took until Feb. 1, 1944, before I Canadian Corps and 5th Canadian Armoured Division were operational in theatre. Having lost the confidence of senior British and Canadian generals, McNaughton resigned.

While these senior personnel changes were taking place, a new unit entered the Italian campaign. The joint American-Canadian First Special Service Force (FSSF) was sent to Italy to be used like infantry, but against objectives

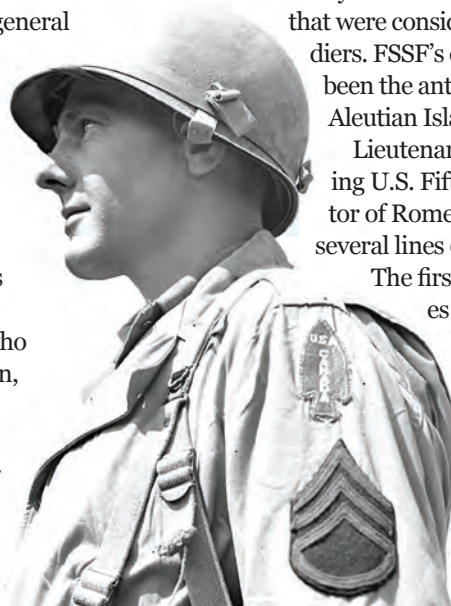
that were considered too tough for ordinary soldiers. FSSF's operational experience to date had been the anti-climatic landing on Kiska in the Aleutian Islands in August 1943 (see page 25).

Lieutenant-General Mark Clark, commanding U.S. Fifth Army, was eager to be the liberator of Rome, but first he had to break through several lines of formidable German defences.

The first of these was in the peaks and ridges before Monte Cassino, in an area known as the Camino hill mass.

While two divisions from X British Corps operated on the

A sergeant with the First Special Service Force at Anzio, Italy, wears the distinctive U.S.A.-Canada spearhead shoulder flash in April 1944.





Refugee families wait to be evacuated from San Pietro, Italy, by the Canadian army in December 1943.

left against Monte Camino, FSSF would assault on the right against two high peaks: Monte la Difensa in front and Monte la Remetanea behind it. Both were more than 900 metres high.

FSSF's 2nd Regiment was tasked with taking the mountain. It was a two-day operation. The first night saw a gruelling seven-hour climb up the sheer face of Monte la Difensa, with all supplies—including water—carried by the soldiers, followed by a lay-up during daylight. On the second night, the assault force scaled the few remaining metres to the top and attacked at dawn on Dec. 3, taking the Germans completely by surprise in a final rush.

For the next two days, the 2nd Regiment held Monte la Difensa and repelled a German counterattack on the morning of Dec. 4. The next day, the regiment's 1st Battalion pushed forward along the narrow ridge that led to Monte la Remetanea, about 900 metres to the north. The battalion came under machine-gun and mortar fire from Monte Camino, but pressed on and took their objective without running into direct opposition.

The next day, Monte Camino fell to a British division and by Dec. 8 the entire Camino hill mass was in Allied hands. In its first action, FSSF had fought with distinction and achieved its objectives, but at a cost of more than 400 casualties.

For its role in capturing the Camino hill mass, FSSF received the battle honours *Monte Camino* and *Monte la Difensa-Monte la Remetanea*. These honours were carried by the Canadian Airborne Regiment as the successor unit to FSSF from its establishment in 1968 until it was disbanded in 1995, but are now authorized to be carried by the Canadian Special Operations Regiment.

Most Canadian soldiers enjoyed the limited diversions offered in Campobasso, while 3rd Brigade and its new commander were tasked with another mission. The Germans had based their new main defensive line on the Sangro River, which they named the Bernhard Line. In the Adriatic

sector, this was also known as the Gustav Line. Together with the Hitler Line, the three lines made up the Winter Line or Winter Position. Eighth Army was about to launch a major offensive against this line and 3rd Brigade would stage a diversionary operation along the upper Sangro, pretending it was the entire Canadian division to deceive the Germans about General Montgomery's actual intentions.

On Nov. 14, the units of 3rd Brigade began their 100-kilometre trek to

the Sangro. It was a slow and laborious move: German demolition parties had destroyed every bridge and culvert, cratered roads and dynamited overhanging cliffs.


In addition, rain and snow turned already marginal roads into muddy tracks. Canadian engineers worked minor miracles by filling in craters, constructing bypasses and erecting Bailey bridges to get the brigade through.

The Germans also pursued a scorched-earth policy and denuded the countryside of houses, barns and other buildings that could be used as billets, and seized all food stocks and farm animals to deny them to the Allies. Thousands of Italian refugees turned to Canadians for food, clothing and shelter, further burdening already strained divisional resources.

Once the slow process of opening up limited routes forward was complete, Canadian battalions began patrolling to clear any enemy still east of the Sangro. Clashes between the two sides in the area's woods and gullies were frequent. Eventually, most of the Germans were cleared from the east bank, except those who occupied a high pinnacle at Castel di Sangro.

Shortly after midnight on Nov. 23, B Company of the West Nova Scotia Regiment set off against this high point. In rain and darkness, they walked into an ambush by German paratroopers and were forced to withdraw. It cost the company five killed and 10 wounded.

Late the next day, the Nova Scotians were back in force, following a heavy artillery bombardment. While A Company assaulted from a flank, C Company provided covering fire from the front. At 4 p.m., the battalion occupied the plateau at the pinnacle, only to find its defenders had fled. For capturing this high point, the West Novas received the honour *Castel di Sangro*.

By Nov. 27, 3rd Brigade's diversionary operations were over and it began heading for the rear to join the rest of the division. For their support to Eighth Army's operations along the river, its battalions were awarded the honour *The Sangro*. 



THE DETACHED BATTALION

In the Battle of Frezenberg, the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry would give no ground

The Canadian Division's ordeal at Ypres in Belgium ended on April 27, 1915, when the 2nd Canadian Infantry Brigade was withdrawn to join other brigades in reserve. However, one Canadian infantry battalion, the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry (PPCLI), was left in the Ypres Salient, the section of the battle line jutting into Germany territory.

The PPCLI had been the brainchild of Hamilton Gault, a wealthy Montrealer who offered \$100,000 to equip and train a battalion comprised of veterans of the British Army who had moved to Canada. Captain Gault, a veteran of the Boer War, was promoted to major and served as second in command to a professional British officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Francis Farquhar.

Both men were determined to keep the regiment separate from the rest of the force assembling at the military training camp at Valcartier, Que., fearing that their experienced soldiers would be given non-commissioned ranks and used to train the other infantry battalions. The PPCLI

mobilized at Lansdowne Park in Ottawa before entraining for Montreal, where they boarded a chartered ship to sail for Europe. When the Royal Navy insisted the ship would have to sail in convoy with the Canadian Expeditionary Force, Gault obtained permission to occupy a militia camp at Lévis, across the river from the chaos unfolding at Valcartier.

When they arrived in England, the PPCLI were attached to the 27th British Infantry Division, one of three divisions formed by recalling battalions from various outposts of the Empire. The PPCLI's "old originals" were a good fit for a division composed of professional soldiers, but apart from Major-General Thomas Snow and his Brigadiers, who had fought in the 1914 campaign, few had any experience of the kind of war that was developing on the Western Front. Snow, who was recovering from a serious injury when his horse fell and rolled over him, was a difficult and stubborn



Wealthy Montreal businessman Hamilton Gault raised the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry at his own expense in 1914. It was the last privately raised regiment in the British Empire. Gault achieved the rank of brigadier-general in 1942.



Members of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry (ABOVE) after the Battle of Frezenberg. The PPCLI took first place in the Best General Service Limbered Wagon category at a Canadian Corps horse show (OPPOSITE TOP) in Belgium in July 1916.

commander who functioned as little more than a conduit for orders from above.

There was no time for combined-arms or brigade-level training before the division was rushed to France in December 1914. The PPCLI, ready or not, entered the trenches near Ypres early in January 1915. The trenches were “ditches dug across a sea of mud, too wide for protection from shellfire and too shallow to be bulletproof,” as Jeffrey Williams described them in his biography of Gault, *First in the Field*. When the PPCLI rotated out three days later, “swollen feet, dysentery and severe colds,” not wounds, were the chief troubles.

The regiment next moved a few miles north to take over trenches at St. Eloi, site of the infamous 1916 Battle of St. Eloi Craters. This was where Farquhar, who was proving to be a superb commanding officer, organized a sniper section to counter the enemy’s use of this tactic. Unwilling to stand on the defensive, he ordered the first large-scale trench raid of the war.

Farquhar called it a “reconnaissance-in-force,” and at 5:15 a.m. on Feb. 27, 100 men of No. 4 Company set out to do some damage to an enemy that the War Diary noted “had become very aggressive.” They crossed no man’s land without rousing the enemy. “Lieut. Crabbe then led the company down the trench whilst Lieut. Papineau ran down the outside of the parapet throwing bombs at the

enemy.” During the withdrawal, Gault was wounded while assisting the stretcher-bearers and was evacuated to England.

During their weeks of misery in the line, 85 Patricias, including Farquhar, were killed, and losses due to wounds, sickness and shell shock further reduced their numbers. As David Bercuson notes in his history of the PPCLI, “some 300 of the men who stood on the parade square at Lansdowne Park...that previous August were permanently or temporarily gone. And yet the PPCLI had not yet seen a general action.”

The decision to extend the British line northward and relieve French divisions for a major spring offensive sent the 27th and 28th British Infantry divisions and the Canadian Division into the Ypres Salient. At first, the Patricias found their new positions in Polygon Wood an improvement over St. Eloi, but when the German gas offensive began on April 23, the battalion was exposed to regular shelling, causing a steady drain of casualties with no way of hitting back.

Like the other battalions in the salient, the PPCLI was the victim of uncertain and indecisive leadership. Sir John French, the British Commander-in-Chief, was under orders to co-operate with the French army—but co-operation does not require capitulation to unreasonable demands. By day

three of the battle, he knew that counterattacks against an enemy with vast superiority in all forms of artillery were a waste of precious lives. Withdrawal to a new defensive line was urgently required, along with reinforcements and all available heavy artillery.

French's counterpart, General Ferdinand Foch, flatly refused to consider any changes that would draw resources away from the offensive designed to capture Vimy Ridge or the complementary British offensive at Aubers scheduled for May 9. Against all evidence, Foch claimed that French troops, who had been pushed back across the Ypres Canal in the first gas attacks, were committed to recovering all of the ground they had lost. The British, he insisted, must not only stay in the exposed salient, but also join in when the French army advanced.

Foch used this argument to persuade French that operations such as the costly advance of the Indian Army's Lahore Division, in support of an unsuccessful French attack, must continue. When Lieutenant-General Horace Smith-Dorrien—the general who, many believed, saved the original British Expeditionary Force at Le Cateau in 1914—urged an end to such attacks and preparations for withdrawal, French dismissed him as too pessimistic.

As losses mounted and the French Army withdrew artillery from their sector, French finally ordered a withdrawal to begin the night of May 3-4. The new line, apparently selected from a map without reference to the ground, offered little protection against the overwhelming firepower that the enemy could bring to bear.

The PPCLI and its sister battalions in the British Army's 80th Brigade had waited out the first phase of the German offensive on the southern side of the salient. Its War Diary reports that the battalion "remained in trenches without relief owing to the battle being fought to the north." They stayed there for 10 days, suffering losses of 8 killed and 66 wounded, until ordered to withdraw.

The Patricias occupied a sector of the new line in front of Bellewaerde Lake, working all night to build fire trenches to add depth to the position. Of necessity, these trenches were located on a forward slope, open to direct observation from the high ground to the east. The British Official History describes the trenches of the new line as "narrow and only three feet deep—they were difficult to improve as some even with slight evacuation reached water level. The soil was treacherous; the trenches fell in even without bombardment and there was a great lack of sandbags to repair them.... The position, though defensible, was a framework on which much was still required to be done. Without deep dugouts to shelter the men during bombardment, it does not seem probable that any troops could have held out for long."

On May 4, the PPCLI War Diary read: "Bellewaerde Lake. Men worked all night on new trenches but by 7 a.m. the Germans were noticed advancing over the crest of the ridge to our right and by 9 a.m. enemy artillery began shelling the trenches and this heavy shelling continued throughout the day, trenches in many places were blown in...26 men killed, 96 wounded, two of which died two days later."

After a 24-hour respite in reserve, the PPCLI returned to the front. The Germans were now confident that they could win control of the remainder of the salient, attacking all across the front. On the morning of May 8, after "a bombardment more violent than anything the Regiment had seen before," the German infantry attacked. The first wave was met by rapid rifle fire, checking the advance, but both the Patricias and the King's Royal Rifle Corps on their right flank were taking casualties.

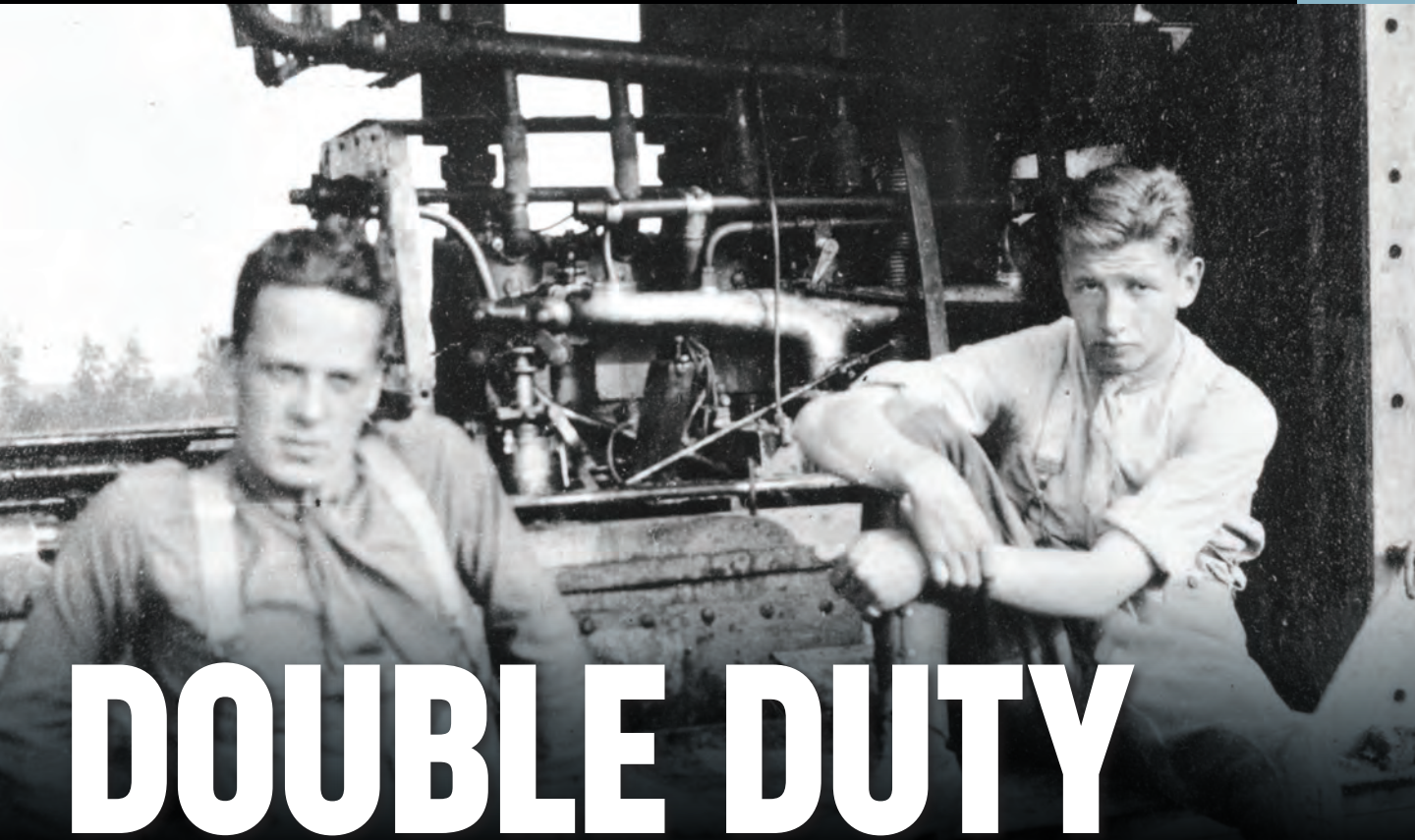
Gault, who had returned to the regiment with a draft of 47 reinforcements straight from England, assumed command after Lieutenant-Colonel H.C. Buller was wounded. Gault ordered everyone available—"Signalers, Pioneers, Orderlies and Servants into the support trenches"—to prepare to fight to the last man. The shelling began again and Gault was among the severely wounded. Command passed to Captain Agar Adamson, and when he was wounded, it passed to Lieutenant Hugh Niven, the senior surviving lieutenant.

The Patricias would not give ground, even after the battalion on their left flank was overrun. The War Diary notes the arrival of a platoon from the King's Shropshire Light Infantry, bringing small arms ammunition and reinforcements. "Another attempt by Germans to advance was stopped by our rifle fire, although some reached the fire trench on the right.... None of our men there were alive at this point."

At 11:30 a.m., the PPCLI was relieved, handing over its support trenches to a reserve battalion "who gave us assistance to bury our dead.... It was impossible and imprudent to attempt to reach the fire trenches" where most of the dead lay. For the Patricias, the battle, designated "Frezenberg Ridge," was over. They had lost 10 officers and 375 other ranks, including 95 killed in action and 81 missing, presumed dead.

The opening of the French Army's Artois offensive and First British Army's attack on Aubers Ridge brought no relief to the battered battalions in the salient. What was left of the British Divisions fought on for another week before exhaustion and ammunition shortages forced the Germans to pause. Ten days later, with a favourable wind, clouds of chlorine gas rising to 40 feet drifted toward the British lines, forcing a further withdrawal. The new line held long enough to persuade the enemy to pause again and consolidate—this time the battle known as Second Ypres was over.

Frezenberg became a treasured battle honour for the Patricias, who held out against great odds. But after the battle, their role as a detached battalion in the British Army could not be maintained. A plan to keep the regiment's elite status by reinforcing them with companies from McGill and other Canadian universities was implemented, but when 27th Division left France for the Mediterranean, the PPCLI were attached to Brigadier-General Archibald Cameron MacDonell's 7th Canadian Infantry Brigade, 3rd Canadian Division. Under his command they would return to the salient to take part in the battle of Sanctuary Wood in June 1916, before making the journey to the Somme. Their war was not yet half over. **LM**



DOUBLE DUTY

Flying veterans of one world war often served with distinction in the next

Thousands of Canadians served in the British flying services during the First World War, and a few were able to find a place in the Royal Canadian Air Force between the wars. Others took up commercial aviation, for varying periods and with mixed success. Most returned to civilian studies or careers, with little contact to their earlier aerial incarnations. Yet when the nation went to war again, many stepped forward to “do their bit,” their flying badges of 1914-1918 proudly displayed on distinct Canadian uniforms. Three of their stories represent a larger pool of service and adventure.

John Ender Palmer (1896-1964) was born in England and raised in Canada from the age of 10. At 18, he joined the Canadian Expeditionary Force as a machine gunner; at 19, he was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal for gallantry at the Battle of Festubert, an offensive by the British army in the Artois region of France in May 1915 (January/February 2009). Commissioned in the field, he transferred to the Royal Flying Corps in October 1917. He became a pilot and



Canadians William Boger (ABOVE, at left) and William Irwin were both flight commanders in No. 56 Squadron of the Royal Air Force in 1918. John Palmer (LEFT) became a barnstormer between the wars.

took courses in the new Gosport system of flight training, which used a standard curriculum, scientific classroom instruction and practical dual flight training.

Palmer then served as an instructor in Britain and later in Canada; claims that he destroyed nine enemy aircraft are erroneous because he never flew in France. Late in 1918, he returned to Britain and flew briefly with the short-lived (and non-operational) Canadian Air Force. He returned to Canada in November 1919 and took his discharge.

But “Jock” Palmer never left flying. Based in Lethbridge, Alta., he became a well-known barnstormer, commercial pilot and instructor, with a two-year time out to establish and operate Radio Station CJOC. Although he was later hailed as the

“Grandfather of Alberta Aviation,” Palmer had a tenuous career. He persisted through crashes, hard times and failed partnerships. In September 1939, he offered his services to the RCAF. By then he was operating a flying school in Cranbrook, B.C., with two de Havilland Moth aircraft, and, to date, he had flown 9,881 hours in 98 types of aircraft.

The air force took him on, first as a civilian instructor and then as a commissioned officer. Almost all his career was spent at No. 5 Elementary Flying Training School (EFTS) at High River, Alta., as instructor, chief flying instructor and commanding officer. He was routinely examined for his competence and always assessed in the highest terms—Voice: “Very Good”; Manner: “Experienced”; Ability to Impart Knowledge: “Exceptional”; Ability as Pilot: “Above average in all respects”; and General Ability: “An exceptional elementary instructor with an excellent background of experience.” He was recommended for an Air Force Cross in February 1943. When it did not go through, his superiors tried again, and an AFC was announced in October 1943.

No. 5 EFTS was a large school, with up to 82 training aircraft—de Havilland Tiger Moths and then Fairchild Cornells, which challenged Palmer’s girth. As the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan (BCATP) began winding down in 1944, Palmer’s superiors tried to argue that his retention in the service was essential to the war effort, but he was released in September 1944, three months before the closing of No. 5 EFTS itself. When he retired from flying in 1955, he had accumulated some 18,000 flying hours; more than 1,000 of these at No. 5 EFTS. He was inducted into Canada’s Aviation Hall of Fame in 1988. His medals are displayed in the Galt Museum & Archives in Lethbridge, while Palmer Road at the Calgary International Airport commemorates his name.

William Roy Irwin (1898-1969) was born in Ripley, Ont. He was accepted by the Royal Naval Air Service in March 1917, but transferred to the Royal Flying Corps in April. In January 1918, he joined No. 56 Squadron, flying Royal Aircraft Factory S.E.5A biplane fighters. This was one of the most successful and famous squadrons of the war. Of the squadron’s great names, Albert Ball, was dead and James McCudden’s final sorties coincided with the first by Irwin. Nevertheless, the unit still had plenty of aggressive pilots in its ranks, including many Canadians. By mid-July 1918, all three flight commanders in No. 56 Squadron were Canadian: William Boger of Winnipeg; Henry “Hank” Burden of Toronto; and Irwin. This trio was broken on Aug. 10, 1918, when Boger was shot down and killed.

Irwin was more senior to Burden for a few days, and he lorded that over him. When Burden got his first decoration, he pointedly reminded Irwin as to which of them was the “hero.” In fact, there were plenty of honours for both. Burden went on to win a Distinguished Service Order and a Distinguished Flying Cross; Irwin was awarded a DFC and Bar. Along the way, he destroyed 11



Irwin became commander of the No. 3 Service Flying Training School in Calgary, one of the largest schools in the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan.

Along the way, Irwin
destroyed 11 German aircraft
in 76 patrols...and several
flights involved low-level
attacks on enemy airfields.

German aircraft in 76 patrols and 176 operational hours. Several flights involved low-level attacks on enemy airfields. (A full account of his career as a fighter pilot appears in the Fall 1981 edition of the *Journal of the Canadian Aviation Historical Society*.)

Wounded in an aerial ambush on Sept. 15, 1918, Irwin was sent to England to take an instructor course. On demobilization, he returned to Canada and became a schoolteacher and principal in Saskatchewan. When the Second World War broke out, he was anxious to serve but wanted to do something more than fly a desk. His old comrade, Hank Burden, had joined the RCAF and assured him that, given Irwin’s relative youth, a flying job could be obtained. Burden was as good as his word. The fact that Billy Bishop was Burden’s brother-in-law may have helped.

Irwin formally enlisted on July 9, 1940, took a flying instructor course at Trenton, then was assigned to No. 11

Service Flying Training School (SFTS) in Yorkton, Sask. He was brilliant and was advanced to chief flying instructor. On Jan. 10, 1943, he was given command of the school, and on May 14, 1943, he took over No. 3 Service Flying Training School in Calgary. This was one of the largest schools in the BCATP. Under his direction, No. 3 SFTS was repeatedly awarded the Air Minister's Efficiency Pennant. On Jan. 1, 1944, he was made a Member, Order of the British Empire, and in March 1944, he was promoted to group captain.

Irwin retired from the RCAF in July 1945, but he did not return to teaching. Instead, he joined the federal Department of Transport. In 1959, he was appointed to the Canadian Transport Board (later the Board of Transport Commissioners). He died in Ottawa in January 1969.

George S.B. Fuller (1893-1986) had seen balloon ascensions and airplane flights in Sherbrooke, Que., before the war. In 1916, he went overseas as a member of the 35th Battery, Canadian Field Artillery. Instead of action in France, he ended up in a brigade headquarters as a paymaster sergeant. Bored with the job, and witnessing aerial activity all around him, including German bombing raids, he applied successfully for transfer to the Royal Flying Corps. He failed pilot training but was sent to the Wireless and Observer School, Brooklands, in Surrey.

On Sept. 10, 1917, he reported to No. 9 Squadron in France. His status as an observer was still considered "provisional." Squadron and brigade officers examined him in knowledge of artillery co-operation, Morse code, operation of an aerial camera and skill with a Lewis machine gun. Thereafter, he would fight his war from the rear cockpit of a Royal Aircraft Factory R.E.8 two-seater reconnaissance and bomber biplane. "My seat was similar to an upholstered piano stool which could be rotated in a full circle," he said.

By March 1918, Lieutenant Fuller had logged 185 hours in 78 flights involving artillery spotting (particularly counter-battery work against enemy guns), photography and bombing. His commander wrote, "This officer has done excellent work as an Observer and has shown great reliability and keenness." Following his tour in France, he took technical courses, then salvaged and repaired aircraft. He was discharged in April 1919 and returned to Canada.

Fuller spent the interwar years managing a fruit and vegetable company in Sherbrooke, while attending aviation events around Montreal that included the 1930 visit of the R-100 airship. When the Second World War started, he enlisted in the Administrative Branch of the RCAF. A course at Trenton, Ont., taught him Service Writing Style, Air Force Law, Central Registry and Orderly Room Procedure,



George Fuller helped found the International Civil Aviation Organization.

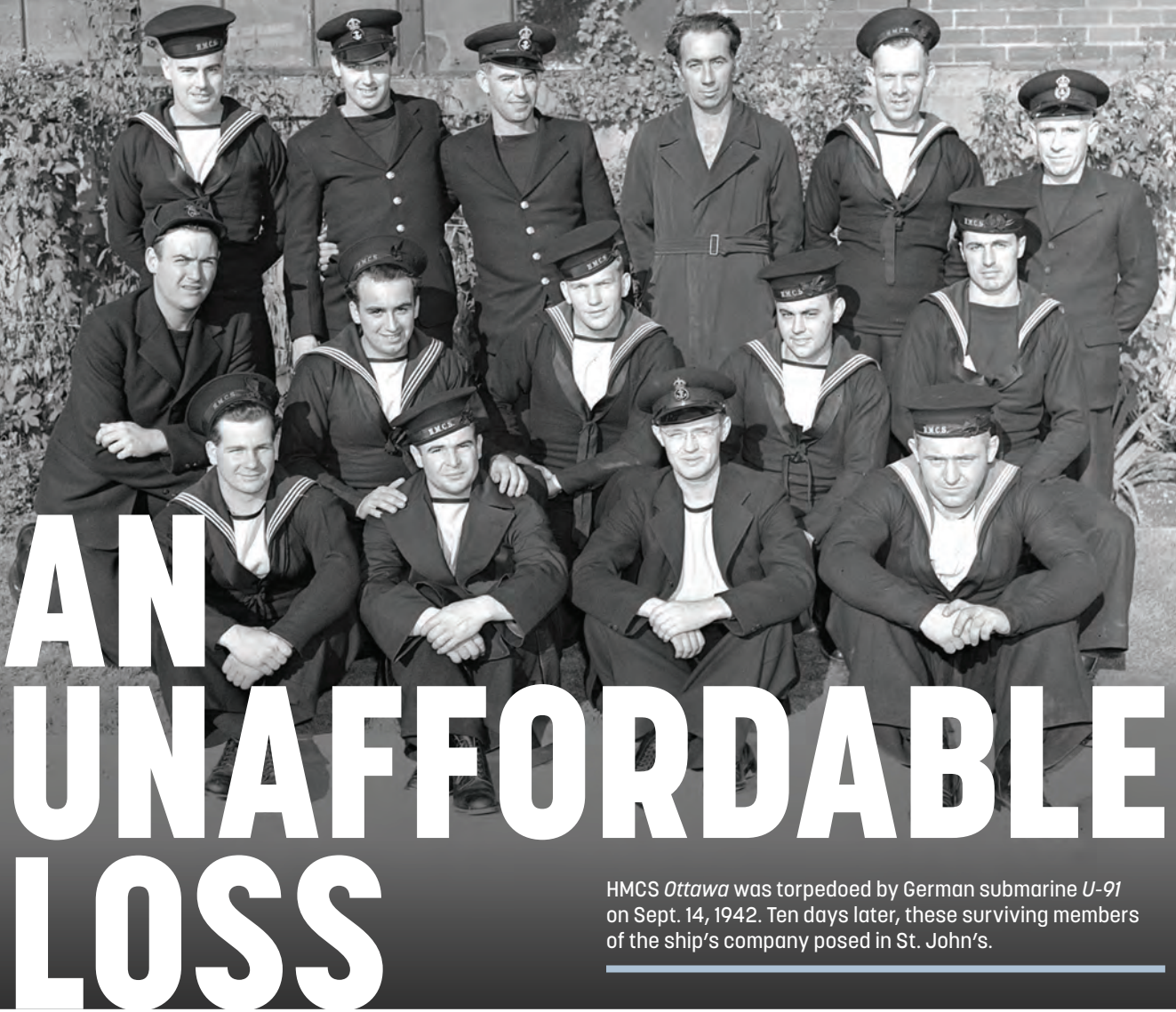
Although he was "flying a desk," Fuller had his hands full with delicate problems, including Flight Lieutenant George "Buzz" Beurling.

and the administration of messes, canteens and equipment stocks. He went on to serve at McGill University, administering RCAF trainees, including radar personnel, and then at the headquarters of No. 3 Training Command in Montreal. In June 1945, he was appointed a Member, Order of the British Empire.

Although he was "flying a desk," eventually in the rank of squadron leader, Fuller had his hands full with delicate problems, including Flight Lieutenant George "Buzz" Beurling, who flouted authority with the certainty that he was an untouchable hero. Beurling was eventually released early amid fanfare that he was being given a "head start" in a return to civilian life. RCAF headquarters sighed with relief. The hero promptly applied to join the United States Army Air Forces, which recognized a hot potato and ignored him.

Fuller made substantive contributions to aviation elsewhere. In the summer of 1945, the United Nations and its component agencies were being organized. The Provisional International Civil Aviation Organization (PICAO), headed by Air Chief Marshal Sir Frederick Bowhill, lacked a secretariat. The RCAF loaned him eight men and women, including Fuller. On Aug. 31, 1945, Bowhill wrote to Air Marshal Robert Leckie, RCAF Chief of the Air Staff, to express his thanks. "The work that they have done on the Preparatory Committee and during this first session has been outstanding, and every Nation represented has been loud in their praise. We were indeed fortunate in having such a wonderful team to lay the foundations for this important conference."

Fuller was released from the RCAF in September 1945. Having helped to found the International Civil Aviation Organization (successor to PICAO), he went on to serve as an administrator with that body. Bilingual and diplomatic, he was especially good at securing the co-operation of city departments, foreign delegates and staff. Meanwhile, he kept in touch with veterans and serving personnel of No. 9 Squadron. He was thrilled when a 1981 visit to Trenton coincided with a Vulcan jet bomber of that squadron passing through, en route to a museum in California. It was a lot more airplane than the R.E.8 had been! **LM**



HMCS *Ottawa* was torpedoed by German submarine *U-91* on Sept. 14, 1942. Ten days later, these surviving members of the ship's company posed in St. John's.

The sinking of HMCS *Ottawa* triggered a shift in the navy's priorities

The battle for convoy ON-127 was effectively over on Sept. 13, 1942, when HMCS *Ottawa* made contact in poor visibility with the relief destroyers about 400 miles east of Newfoundland. The RCN's official history recorded Lieutenant Tom Pullen's memory of that moment. "All was tranquil," recalled Pullen. "The sea lay calm beneath a starry sky and the familiar swishing sounds of our bow wave fell gently away from the shoulders of the ships."

Ottawa was also moving slowly, "slipping along at ten knots," trying to confirm the radar contacts that

Lieutenant-Commander C.A. "Larry" Rutherford hoped were the destroyers HMCS *Annapolis* and HMS *Witch*. Visibility was so poor that *Ottawa* had to close to within 1,000 yards of *Witch* to confirm who she was.

Meanwhile, on the conning tower of *U-91*, Kapitänleutnant Heinz Walkerling was watching closely, too. In fact, he had tracked a slow-moving "two funnel destroyer" for some time, and was only 1,000 yards away when *U-91* fired two torpedoes.

Pullen, *Ottawa*'s first lieutenant, was on deck when a torpedo hit the port bow, just forward of 'A' gun. He recalled a rending explosion and a brilliant flash of orange light. "The ship's forward superstructure, funnels and bridge, all the parts visible from where I stood agape, became momentarily silhouetted by an orange glow." In the sudden silence that followed, the only sound was that of debris falling into the sea and "clattering onto the upper deck."



Seaman gunner Norman Wilson was standing by 'B' gun, just behind the explosion. Apart from the noise and shock, Wilson recalled "water cascading down on us" from the geyser thrown up by the detonation, the fore-castle deck peeled back like a sardine can, and the barrel of the gun bent.

When Pullen pushed his way through the door into the forward mess, he walked into "scenes of carnage" and the sight of the sea where *Ottawa's* bow used to be. Men were trapped in compartments that he could not open or reach. Two young sailors were entombed in the ASDIC compartment in the bowels of the ship, and their pleas for help could be heard plainly through the voice pipe on the bridge. "What could, what should one do," Pullen recalled, "other than offer words of encouragement that help was coming when such was manifestly out of the question?"

The good news for the moment was that the bulkhead was holding and *Ottawa* was only slightly down by her bow. Lieutenant-Commander A. H. "Dobby" Dobson took one look from HMCS *St. Croix* when she arrived on the scene and sped away to pull merchant sailors from the sea closer to the convoy. Rutherford did not order *Ottawa* abandoned, and no orders were given to throw her secret books over the side. Sub-Lieutenant Don Wilson took it upon himself to go below and collect the books from the ship's safe; he was never seen again.

In the meantime, *Ottawa's* crew worked to save her. She would have to make the 400 miles to St. John's in reverse, but HMCS *Saguenay* had done just that in December 1940, after her bow was shot off 300 miles west of Ireland. So there was reason for hope.

Survivors of a torpedoed merchant ship and HMCS *Ottawa* return to St. John's aboard HMCS *Arvida* on Sept. 15, 1942.

Unfortunately, Walkerling was not done. He saw *St. Croix* returning to help the stricken destroyer and, according to the RCN official history, circled back to attack her. What he actually fired at, about 15 minutes after the first attack, was *Ottawa*. This time a lone torpedo hit *Ottawa's* starboard side, in the number-two boiler room. The explosion broke the destroyer's back. She rolled over then quickly split into two. The bow was the first to sink.

"What happened at the end is hard to contemplate for the imprisoned pair [in the ASDIC compartment]," Pullen recalled, "as that pitch-black, watertight, sound-proof box rolled first 90 degrees to starboard and then 90 degrees onto its back before sliding into the depths and oblivion. It is an ineradicable memory."

Fortunately, gunner L.I. Jones had set the depth charges to safe, so none exploded to kill the men who managed to get off when the stern section sank. As the last of *Ottawa* disappeared, *St. Croix* sped past on the hunt for a surfaced U-boat spotted by her lookouts. The men in the water shouted "Saint Croix! Saint Croix!" as the old four-stacker raced by, according to Fraser McKee and Robert Darlington, authors of *The Canadian Navy Chronicle, 1939-1945*. Eventually, *St. Croix* found and disabled *U-411*, but it was four hours before anyone returned to help the survivors of *Ottawa*.

In the meantime, convoy ON-127 steamed quietly and solemnly through the wreckage of the destroyer and its survivors and, as Pullen wrote, “Just as quietly was gone. A tanker in ballast passed so close we could see a cavernous hole in her side.” The damaged ship was probably the *F.J. Wolfe*, a 12,190-ton tanker torpedoed on Sept. 10 but able to stay with the convoy. The night was very dark, but clear, and the calcium flares on *Ottawa*’s Kisbee rings (life preservers named for British naval officer Thomas Kisbee) probably illuminated the scene. The men certainly were seen from passing ships. The SS *Athelduchess* dropped some Carley floats (life rafts designed by American inventor Horace Carley) and the SS *Clausina*, likely the last ship in one of the columns, stopped to search for survivors—that would have been her duty. However, when she saw HMCS *Arvida* in the area, *Clausina* resumed her course, leaving the rescue work to *Arvida* and HMS *Celandine*.

Ottawa had sunk far enough to the east to be out of the Labrador Current and just in the Gulf Stream. Even so, the water was cold and the men grew numb and weak as the hours passed. It did not help that the survivors were beset by jellyfish that stung bare flesh and left what McKee and Darlington called “almost unbearable itching later in hospital.” Several men are known to have died when they were struck by one of the rescuing corvettes as it came down off a wave.

In the end, *Celandine* pulled 49 survivors from the sea, and *Arvida* recovered 27 more: a total of 76. Not all were from *Ottawa*; two were from *Empire Oil*, which *Ottawa* rescued on Sept. 10. The RCN official history says 137 men perished; McKee and Darlington put the loss at 141. There is general agreement that Rutherford survived the sinking and then drowned after passing his life jacket to a young sailor. Lieutenant George Hendry, *Ottawa*’s doctor, perished trying to save the life of a man he had just operated on.

The crews of *Arvida* and *Celandine* did what they could to ease the suffering. So, too, did the survivors. When Lieutenant L.B. “Yogi” Jensen arrived in *Celandine*’s wardroom, soaking wet, black with oil, shivering and crawling with jellyfish stings, *Ottawa*’s Leading Steward Michael Barriault greeted him with a warm, “Good evening, sir, would you like a cup of tea?” Jensen replied with equal civility, “Good evening, Barriault. That would be very nice, thank you!”

The fallout from the battle for ON-127 was rather muted, at least on the western side of the Atlantic. The American admiral at Naval Station Argentia in Newfoundland thought Dobson had conducted an “active” escort, “and took lively countermeasures against attacking U-boats.” He did chastise Dobson for thinking he could establish an ASDIC barrier in front of ON-127 with only five ships, and thought he should have been more aggressive

in the use of destroyer sweeps in daylight. The latter was increasingly the preferred American tactic for trying to break up a gathering U-boat pack in the absence of HF/DF fixes on incoming subs. Rear-Admiral Leonard W. Murray praised Dobson and Escort Group C-4 for a job well done, and blamed the loss of seven ships from the convoy primarily on the lack of modern Type 271 radar.

It took some time for copies of the escort report of proceeds and the convoy commodore’s report to reach the United Kingdom. So senior staff at Western Approaches Command (WAC) did not write their comments on ON-127 until late October, more than a month after the battle.

They were not happy. Commander C.D. Howard-Johnston, the Staff Officer, Anti-Submarine at WAC, was positively cutting. “There is an unnecessary waste of escort’s efforts to sink damaged ‘freighters,’” he wrote. “In one case, *Sherbrooke* has managed to get 25 miles astern of the convoy in order to sink torpedoed ships. What is *St. Croix*’s idea?... He is helping to reduce our tonnage by weakening the escort and completing the enemy’s work.”

Captain R.W. Ravenhill, the WAC Operations Officer, shared Howard-Johnston’s concerns and extended them to include the RCN senior staff in St. John’s, which he described as a “complete muddle.” The official WAC report to the Admiralty was a little more discreet, noting laconically “It is the enemy’s purpose to sink our tonnage.”

By the time these words were penned, WAC had every reason to be anxious about further losses, and about the ability of the RCN’s mid-ocean escort groups. To some extent, their criticism of the RCN’s mid-ocean operations in the early fall arose from an admission by the RCN itself that it needed help. The navy simply could not afford to lose *Ottawa*. HMCS *Assiniboine* was still under repair following her epic battle with *U-210* in August and HMCS *St. Laurent* was just coming out of a long refit, so the RCN was down to three River-class destroyers. Of the six Town-class destroyers in Canadian service, only *St. Croix* had the legs for transatlantic work. So at best, the RCN had one destroyer available for each of its four mid-ocean escort forces. Each was supposed to have two.

Two days after *Ottawa* went down, the RCN asked the Admiralty for help. Ideally, it needed more long-range destroyers, but a couple of the 10 frigates being built in Canada to British accounts would help if the Admiralty would allow the RCN to take them over. The appeal for help after ON-127 marked the start of a brief period when the RCN shifted its priorities from building a fleet that suited its professional ambitions to one that met the immediate needs of the escort fleet, of the war itself. Over the next few weeks, events in the mid-ocean and in the Gulf of St. Lawrence accelerated that shift in priorities. **LM**

Two young sailors were trapped in the bowels of the ship, and their pleas for help could be heard plainly through the voice pipe on the bridge.

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JOHN McCRAE STATUE HONOURS VETERANS

BY TOM MacGREGOR

THE CANADIAN DOCTOR

who penned the poem “In Flanders Fields” in the midst of one of the bitterest battles of the First World War has been commemorated in Ottawa with a statue.

The statue of Lieutenant-Colonel John McCrae was unveiled May 3 during a ceremony in Green Island Park to mark the centennials of the writing of the poem, the Second Battle of Ypres and the gas attacks at St. Julien in Belgium.

Employment and Social Development Minister Pierre Poilievre, the regional minister for Ottawa, reviewed an honour guard consisting of members of the Royal Regiment of Canadian Artillery and the Royal Canadian Medical Service. The RCA Band provided music and the Army Voices choir sang an arrangement of “In Flanders Fields” and a medley of First World War songs. Attending were a number of McCrae’s relatives, including Geills Turner, accompanied by her husband, former prime minister John Turner.

After a short remembrance ceremony, Poilievre assisted in the unveiling.

The statue was a way for the RCA to honour one of its own. McCrae had served in the Canadian Field Artillery in Guelph, Ont., and was commissioned a second lieutenant in 1893. In 1899, he left his medical studies to volunteer for the South African War.



TOM MacGREGOR

Ruth Abernethy’s statue portrays John McCrae in army uniform, writing his poem with poppies at his feet.

He maintained his ties to the artillery as he became a respected researcher, doctor and teacher in Montreal. When the First World War broke out, he contacted his friend William Morrison, then the director of artillery, to offer his services as a gunner. Doctors were in greater demand at the time, so McCrae went overseas as the surgeon to the 1st Brigade, Canadian Field Artillery.

McCrae was with the Canadian forces when they first saw action during the Second Battle of Ypres. It was here on April 22, 1915, that German forces unleashed chlorine gas. The gas was used first against the Algerians in the French portion of the lines. When the French line broke, it left a gap in the Allies' salient that the enemy was ready to exploit.

Yet the Canadians launched a series of counterattacks and closed the line. On April 24, gas was used again. This time it was aimed at the Canadian lines around St. Julien. Again the Canadians withstood the attack.

But the losses were terrible. The Canadians suffered more than 2,000 dead and another 4,000 wounded or missing. McCrae dealt with much

of the carnage in his makeshift dressing station in a bunker at Essex Farm.

Exhausted by the work and haunted by the death of his friend Lieutenant Alexis Helmer, for whom he had conducted the funeral service, McCrae wrote his famous poem.

Although it was rejected by the first publisher McCrae approached, it was published by *Punch* magazine on Dec. 8, 1915. The poem became instantly popular among the Canadian troops and their allies.

"It is Canada's best known literary work," said RCA Colonel Commandant James Selbie.

The statue was co-commissioned by the RCA, the Canadian Army and the Royal Canadian Medical Service. Contributors included Veterans Affairs Canada, the government of

Flanders and Dominion Command of The Royal Canadian Legion, which holds the poppy as a trademark.

The larger-than-life bronze statue, situated beside the National Artillery Memorial along the Ottawa River, was created by sculptor Ruth Abernethy, who also designed the statues of Oscar Peterson at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa and Glenn Gould at the CBC building in Toronto.

It features McCrae sitting, writing the poem, with poppies at his feet. "His iconic poem truly honours the service of all Canada's veterans and preserves their legacy for future generations," said Poilievre. "Canadians now have the opportunity to enjoy this statue and honour John McCrae's contribution to our shared history." **LM**

CENOTAPH RAISED IN SMALL COMMUNITY

BY MARY ANN GOHEEN

FOR YEARS there had been discussion and even numerous committees to bring a cenotaph to the small community of Wainfleet, Ont., about 40 kilometres from Niagara Falls. But for various reasons, the cenotaph never came to fruition.

The idea was revived about two years ago when the Wainfleet Women's Institute approached the municipal council proposing that a memorial commemorating the end of various wars and recognizing the community's war dead be revisited. The council for the township of 6,000 forwarded the request to the Wainfleet Historical Society and in doing so, set the wheels in motion.

A committee was formed with Wainfleet councillor Ted Hessels and Doug Willford and Bob Cumming of Rose City Branch in Welland, about 20 kilometres away.

The committee approached Kirkpatrick Stoneworks in neighbouring Fonthill and artist Laurie Meredith came up with three design options based on the committee's ideas. "Once we had the designs, we posted them at the town hall, the library, the arena and showed it to a number of church groups. We also put it on the township's website," said committee chair Willford.

Four months later, the winning design was chosen and Kirkpatrick completed the project under budget at a cost of \$36,160.

Finally, on Oct. 19, the obelisk was unveiled to an audience of more than 200. Politicians from various levels spoke. Willford acknowledged the many local contributors, including a grant from the Canadian War Memorial Fund administered by Veterans Affairs Canada.

Colour parties and Legionnaires from branches in Welland, Port Colborne and Beamsville attended. The Port Colborne air cadets conducted a vigil at the cenotaph and were also part of the parade.

Addressing the audience, Wainfleet Mayor April Jeffs said, "War, in definition by today's standards, has now crossed our borders. What started out as a monument to honour those who served decades before us also serves as a sober reminder of how precious our freedom truly is."

One hundred years after the beginning of the First World War, the community of Wainfleet finally has a place to remember its war dead and the sacrifices of all veterans. "There's a real sense of accomplishment and pride," said Willford. "I think that summarizes it all." **LM**

IMPROVED BENEFITS CAUTIOUSLY WELCOMED

VETERANS ADVOCATES have welcomed changes to the New Veterans Charter announced this spring, but they caution there is still more on the to-do list.

In March and April, Veterans Affairs Minister Erin O'Toole made a series of announcements that go some way to addressing the most serious criticisms of the Charter, including the Retirement Income Security Benefit to improve financial support after age 65; a Family Caregiver Relief Benefit; expanded eligibility to the Permanent Impairment Allowance, increasing the Earnings Loss Benefit for reservists; and a retroactive, tax-free Critical Injury Benefit of \$70,000 to the most severely disabled veterans (Editorial, May/June).

And in April, the minister announced the hiring of more than 100 permanent case managers over the

next year to be distributed according to need. To further improve service to veterans, the caseloads are to be reduced to an average of 30, from 40. The government "is committed to service excellence for veterans and their families," said O'Toole. "We are refreshing and boosting resources so VAC has the support it needs."

O'Toole seemed intent on mending fences with veterans before Parliament recessed and the federal election campaign began. The 120-day deadline for reducing administrative paperwork for veterans expires the first week of July, but the changes should already be felt as the minister gave the "veteran-centric" Communications Task Force authority to "make positive change at any time" to simplify forms and paperwork.

Veterans Ombudsman Guy Parent

lauded O'Toole for "pushing to the forefront the need to create a real 'continuum of care' for veterans and their families." But, he added, "Let's not forget all that is still left to do."

The Royal Canadian Legion is pleased the government has levelled the field for reservists, changed the Permanent Impairment Allowance and is providing a Family Care Relief Benefit, Dominion President Tom Eagles said at an April VAC stakeholder summit. But he said the Legion will continue to monitor "to ensure the government's commitments meet expectations."

The Legion would like to see access to the Veterans Independence Program based on need, improvements in turnaround times for disability claims, and improvements in disability awards, among other things. **LM**

serving you

Serving You is written by Legion command service officers. To reach a service officer, call toll-free 1-877-534-4666, or consult a command website. For years of archives, visit www.legionmagazine.com

MANY MEMBERS of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and their families appreciate the work being done by The Royal Canadian Legion on behalf of military veterans and their families, but few RCMP members realize the important work the Legion does on their behalf.

The Legion Service Bureau Network has been around since 1926 and has service officers across the country at Legion branches and provincial commands. These service officers can assist former and current members of the RCMP and their families by representing their interests in claiming disability benefits under the *Pension Act* from Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) and the Veterans Review and Appeal Board (VRAB).

Legion professional service officers provide counselling, assistance and representational services, from a VAC first application to a VRAB appeal, free of charge whether or not you are a Legion member.

Veterans seeking a disability claim often ask if there are any advantages associated with using the services of a command service officer of The Royal Canadian Legion Service Bureau Network. While all advocates bring their own qualities and strengths, we think Legion service officers are a special breed. We are there to serve those who serve.

Indeed, Legion command service officers are former members of the Canadian Armed Forces, the RCMP and VAC, with extensive

experience with the Service Bureau Network. We understand CF and RCMP terminology, culture and operational practices. This unique background promotes a good understanding between the veteran and Legion service officer.

Next time you consider submitting a disability claim or an appeal, remember that we care and our services are second to none. More than 3,100 veterans with disability claims sought the help of Legion service officers in 2014.

If you require assistance accessing VAC disability benefits or have a friend or family member who needs help, please contact a command service officer at www.legion.ca or call, toll-free, 1-877-534-4666. **LM**



SUPPORT FOR HOMELESS VETERANS CONTINUES IN ONTARIO

BY TOM MacGREGOR

Ontario Command's efforts

for homeless veterans continued to garner strong support from the 575 delegates attending the 49th Ontario Command Convention, May 9-13, in Niagara Falls.

"Our homeless veterans program is extremely active, with a running total of over 378 clients assisted, 130 permanently housed and, to date, we spent just shy of \$775,000," said President Bruce Julian in his president's report. As well as sponsoring facilities on Parliament and Bathurst streets in Toronto, the command is in negotiations for apartment units built for this year's Pan American Games and a new facility in Ottawa.

When asked how many homeless veterans there are in Ontario, Executive Director Dave Gordon replied, "You might as well ask me how many snowflakes fell in the last snowfall. We have no idea." Delegates showed their support, raising more than \$115,000 for the program.

It was the highlight of the convention, which began with a simple ceremony of remembrance in front of the cenotaph at A.C. McCallum Branch in Niagara Falls. Diane Condon, who chaired the Local Arrangements Committee from Zone B-5, acted as master of ceremonies. Wreaths were placed on behalf of Silver Cross mothers, Veterans Affairs Canada, Dominion Command and Ontario Command.

Condon announced at the end of the ceremony that President Julian had fired the zone's 25-pound field gun, when he first left the zone for Ontario Command and that he should do so as he is about to leave the president's office. He was led to the gun and fired one ceremonial blank shot.

Shortly after, an impressive parade marched off, bound for the Scotiabank Convention Centre two kilometres away. Military vehicles were spread throughout the parade, many carrying veterans who would have trouble walking the parade route.

Opening ceremonies followed inside the convention centre with Dominion First Vice Dave Flannigan officially declaring the convention open. Business sessions began



the next morning, with President Julian outlining some of the changes the command is facing.

"In an attempt to better serve and reconnect with both our members and our branches, Ontario Command has initiated a Provincial Revitalization Committee. It is a committee jointly chaired by our vice-presidents but made up of members from the zones and branches from across command," he said. "Realizing there are many impediments to significant change, such as existing structure and bylaws, current federal and provincial acts, branch autonomy and an inherent resistance to fundamental change, their

mandate is quite simple—come up with a better, more efficient, more productive, more financially responsible way for our branches and command to move forward."

Honorary Treasurer Don Hubbs received applause by announcing that the command had \$249,504 in excess revenue for the year ending May 31, 2014, in part due to the success of the veterans licence plate program and the new military service recognition book. "I can assure you that the finances of Ontario Command are in good shape and hopefully will remain this way for some time to come," he said.

Moving on to the Ways and Means Committee report, Hubbs said, "The committee has considered the per-capita required by our command over the next two-year term and recommends that there be no per-capita increase." The recommendation was enthusiastically carried.

Earlier in the convention, Pierre Lemieux, the parliamentary secretary to the minister of Veterans Affairs, spoke of the department's efforts to become "veteran-centric." "Veterans need to be first and foremost in all we do at Veterans Affairs Canada. They should feel valued by Canadians and the Canadian government."

Lemieux pointed out that he spent 20 years in the Canadian Armed Forces and that Veterans Affairs Minister Erin O'Toole is a veteran, as is Deputy Minister Walt Natynczyk, the former chief of defence staff. He outlined a number of measures



Dominion First Vice Dave Flannigan (left) places a wreath assisted by Ontario Command Past President André Paquette. Above: President Bruce Julian prepares to fire the gun. Opposite page: Brian Weaver is installed as the new president of Ontario Command.

announced recently to improve veterans benefits and to introduce changes to the New Veterans Charter.

Flannigan brought greetings from Dominion Command and explained that membership was undergoing many changes in an attempt to improve the renewal process. He also spoke on the Legion's work with the Royal Commonwealth Ex-Services League. Delegates later raised more than \$21,000 for the RCEL from the floor.

Veterans Services/Seniors Committee Chair Greg Oakes expressed skepticism on the improvements to VAC benefits which have been announced but not passed into legislation at press time. "So far the MPs are taking credit for our work and the work they have not done yet to improve the [New Veterans Charter]. We have shown them there are 14 points to address and they know it. We cannot trust VAC's presentation of the improvements. They may never happen. The Legion message about the charter is not a cry in the wilderness, but it has to become louder, so it becomes public opinion."

Member-participation sports drew a lot of attention. Sports Committee Chair Vic Newey reported that there was a sharp increase in eight-ball pool participation. "Branches have noticed an increase in the membership of the younger people coming in to play the sport," he said. Several delegates spoke in support of eight-ball, which will be suspended as a Dominion Command sport in 2016.

Two events had been dropped from the provincial sports program, 10-pin bowling and lawn bowling. "After several tries to revive both events, it was decided by the Sports Committee that the interest was no longer there and it was best to cancel both events," said Newey. He added that both events happen outside the branch and do not allow the branches to make the sort of profit that is made on events that are played in the branch, such as cribbage and darts.

Sports was the focus of three of the non-concurred resolutions which were brought back to the floor on the last day. All three passed, expanding the sports program to include the game of washer toss, a women's division in the golf pro-

gram, and a seniors' level for dart players 55 and older.

A number of familiar resolutions were passed dealing with veterans' care, including one calling for the Government of Canada to issue an identity card for veterans of the Canadian Armed Forces, the RCMP and their families; survivors' pensions to be increased; and that the federal government maintain long-term care beds for today's veterans.

Executive Director Gordon gave his report, saying that the command had recently opened an office for a command service officer in London and closed the command office in Windsor. He also announced this would be his last convention, as he will retire next year.

In elections, First Vice Brian Weaver of Capt. Brien Branch in Essex was acclaimed command president.

Vice-President Sharon McKeown of Pte. Joe Waters Branch in Milton was elected first vice in a contest with fellow vice-president Ken Sorrenti of Cardinal Branch.

Sorrenti then dropped down and faced six other challengers for the three positions of vice-president, Greg Kobold of Brighton Branch, Garry Pond of Carleton Place Branch, Jay Burford of Todmorden Branch in Toronto, Mike Giovenetti of Tottenham Branch, Derek Moore of Capt. Fred Campbell VC Branch in Mount Forest and John Grosvenor of Hon. Ray Lawson Branch in Chatham. Vice-President David Smith of Wagner Memorial Branch in Teeterville declined to seek another term. After four ballots, Sorrenti, Pond and Moore were elected.

Honorary Treasurer Don Hubbs of Burlington Branch, Chairman Bill Chafe of Sarnia Branch and Vice-Chairman Ron Goebel of Carleton Place Branch were all acclaimed to another term.

Weaver thanked delegates for their support, saying that being elected command president fulfilled a promise he made to his father to get involved in the Legion. "This is not my Legion or even Ontario Command's Legion. This is your Legion," he said. "Everyone in Ontario Command is there to help you." **LM**

COAST-TO-COAST CAMARADERIE AT CRIBBAGE CHAMPIONSHIPS

BY ADAM DAY

IT WAS A GREAT WEEKEND of camaraderie and cards in Spruce Grove, Alta., at the Dominion Command Cribbage Championships, held April 24-26.

On Saturday morning, Spruce Grove Branch hosted the tournament's opening ceremony, with Spruce Grove Mayor Stuart Houston giving the opening address. "May your cards turn up so you can avoid the skunk line," he joked to the assembled players. President Rob Coates then declared the tournament open and, without delay, play began.

First up was the doubles competition. It was close from the start, but with three rounds remaining, four teams had distanced themselves from the pack. Just a few points separated them and it was anyone's game right down to the wire. Going into the final two rounds, Saskatchewan held a slim lead with 11 points while the other three front-runners had 10.

As the last cards hit the table, it was clear that the Saskatchewan team of Eleanor Adams and Linda Beckman were not going to be beaten. The team from Tecumseh-Stoughton Branch in Stoughton finished with 15 points. The team of Betty Yeomans and Linda Anderson from Lancaster Branch in Saint John, N.B., came second, finishing with 13 points.

Adams and Beckman are a mother-daughter duo with a long history of competitive play, having made it to the dominion level twice before in the team competition. "It was stiff competition out there," said Beckman, shortly after they secured victory. "Our opponents were excellent, but we started out playing really, really well and ended better."

As with almost all of the competitors, Beckman insisted on pointing out the "great comradeship"



Dominion team champions receive their awards: (from left) President Rob Coates, Kirk Conrad, Cyril Slade, Dominion Command Sports Committee member Dan Kidd, Bob Hamilton and Roy Driscoll.

at the meet. "We started out playing against Ontario and we beat them, skunked them actually, and they were still all smiles. It was run very professionally. The whole weekend was good. It's like we've known these people for years."

Later on Saturday afternoon, singles play began but didn't finish until midway through Sunday morning.

On Saturday evening, most of the nearly 50 competitors present made their way to the branch for lasagna and Caesar salad, with some live country-and-western music.

In singles, Cyril Slade of Fairview Branch in Halifax pulled into the lead after the fifth round and never looked back, finishing with 16 points, two points ahead of second-place finisher Andy Gauthier of Lacombe Branch in Alberta.

Slade, who turned 80 on Jan. 10, has been playing competitive cribbage for 60 years. This wasn't his first time at the dominion; he won the doubles in 2010. "It was just

excellent," said Slade. "Everybody was great and friendly and honest and everything was 100 per cent above board. I feel great about winning, everybody played excellent, no complaints and no problems."

As for whether Slade has a competitive future ahead of him, he just chuckles. "At 80 years old, I got my doubts that I'll be doing it again. All the travel is a bit hard," he said. "But if they talk me into it at the Legion, well, I probably will."

With only a few hours left before the closing banquet, the team competition had to keep to a tight schedule in order to complete play. The main room at Spruce Grove Branch was packed as 40 players from across Canada split up to form 10 different tables of four players in two flights. At the end of the day, the total score from both flights would be added together to determine the winner.

Halfway through, it was too close to call; all of the teams were still in

RESULTS



Doubles winners (above) Eleanor Adams and Linda Beckman receive their award from Coates, Kidd and sports officer Neil Gorman, as does singles winner Cyril Slade (left).

Committee,” he said. “And our branch got to bond and everybody really came together.”

At only 35 years old, Coates is an unusually young president.

“I come from a line of other presidents,” he explained. “Both my father and my mother served as branch presidents. I was youth officer when I became a member at 19.”

The highlight of the weekend for Coates was when the local Global TV news crew showed up to cover the event. “We’re doing a big push to get the Legion into the community,” said Coates, “so hopefully that coverage will really help.”

Dominion Command Sports Committee representative Dan Kidd—who is also the president of Manitoba-Northwestern Ontario Command—also enjoyed his first trip to a dominion-level sporting event. He came away a supporter. “I think it’s very, very important

the hunt. But then with a slow but inexorable surge, singles winner Slade and his team from Fairview Branch—Bob Hamilton, Roy Driscoll and Kirk Conrad—carved out the top spot in the standings and never relinquished it, going on to win the championship.

“It’s the first time we were ever in it and we won! All the people are fabulous and we couldn’t have done it any better,” said Hamilton. “Everything’s been run so well. It’s all been good.”

President Coates was certainly happy to hear that the players enjoyed the event. “Putting on this event was honestly a pleasure. It was great have to have a really good team on the Local Arrangements

TEAM: N.S./Nunavut (Fairview Br., Halifax) 26; Sask. (Tompkins Br.), P.E.I. (Montague Br.) 24; Ont. (Lt.-Col. Harry Babcock Br., Napanee) 23; N.B. (Lancaster Br., Saint John) 22; Alta.-N.W.T. (Lacombe Br.) 21; Nfld.-Lab. (Carbonear Br.) 20; B.C./Yukon (Maple Ridge Br.) 17; Man.-N.W.O. (Morden Br.) 15; Que. (Hon. John Diefenbaker Br., Laval) 14.

DOUBLES: Sask. (Tecumseh-Stoughton Br.) 15; N.B. (Lancaster Br.) 13; Alta.-N.W.T. (Lacombe Br.), B.C./Yukon (Chase Br.), Man.-N.W.O. (Selkirk Br.) 11; N.S./Nunavut (Fairview Br.), Nfld.-Lab. (Carbonear Br.), Que. (Hon. John Diefenbaker Br.) 9; Ont. (Lt.-Col. Harry Babcock Br., Napanee), P.E.I. (Montague Br.) 8.

SINGLES: N.S./Nunavut (Cyril Slade, Fairview Br.) 16; Alta.-N.W.T. (Andy Gauthier, Lacombe Br.) 14; B.C./Yukon (Tony Bos, Alberni Valley Br., Port Alberni), Sask. (Charlene Vandal, Big River Br.) 12; N.B. (Dot Arbeau, Lancaster Br.) 11; Ont. (Paul Mason, Lt.-Col. Harry Babcock Br.) 10; Nfld.-Lab. (John Murphy, Carbonear Br.) 9; P.E.I. (Lynda McCarron, Montague Br.) 8; Que. (Ernie Michaud, Hon. John Diefenbaker Br.) 7; Man.-N.W.O. (Robert Ritchie, Red Rock, Ont., Br.) 6.

to have dominion sports. You have coast-to-coast camaraderie. And if you don’t have dominion sports, what do you have for your members?” said Kidd. “I would like to keep it going. It’s important to our members. Cribbage and darts are very popular.”

The next dominion cribbage championships will be held in Charlottetown in 2016. **LM**



56th QUEBEC CONVENTION

FINANCES DOMINATE QUEBEC COMMAND CONVENTION

BY TOM MacGREGOR

Quebec Command delegates

showed their support for getting the command back on a solid financial footing when delegates met in Laval for the 56th Quebec Command Convention May 15-17.

President Norman Shelton set the tone early in the convention in his President's Report: "Comrades, the past two years at Quebec Command have been a challenge, to say the least. We have been in a deficit for the past five years, so we have had no other choice than to make as many financial cuts as possible, without eliminating any program or services to our veterans."

Among the savings outlined were reducing convention costs by \$25,000, signing a new lease for the command office at a savings of \$27,000 and withdrawing the command's participation in two Dominion Command sports, curling and eight-ball.

Later in the convention, Treasurer Madonna Boch presented a recommendation that the per-capita tax be increased by \$3. "Twelve years ago, command reduced the per-capita tax by \$2 and now we need to bring it back to what it was 12 years ago, plus a one-dollar increase because of the decrease in membership and changes in the economy," she said.

Former Quebec Command president Don Wells told delegates: "I guess I'm part of what is called the Old Guard, but we were too generous 12 years ago. We should have kept the money," he said.

During the debate, Shelton amended the recommendation to ask for an increase of \$2 and delegates agreed.

Among the changes at this convention was to squeeze all ceremonies and business into two days. While registration opened the day before, the convention began with opening ceremonies on the Saturday morning. Following greetings by Dominion Vice-President André Paquette and Laval Mayor Marc Demers, delegates broke for a parade to the cenotaph near Laval City Hall. After a wreath-placing ceremony, the parade marched off with Shelton,



Paquette, Charlotte Bastien of Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) and Veterans Ombudsman Guy Parent taking the salute.

Business resumed after lunch at the Paragon Reception Hall near Chomedey Branch. The 105 delegates were seated around the banquet hall at round tables covered with white linen. Dominion Vice-President Tom Irvine, a former Quebec Command chairman, filled in for Chairman Jean-Robert Pépin who was unable to attend.

Parent was the first guest speaker. He noted that The Royal Canadian Legion has been helping veterans for

90 years. "What do I do? I am the protector of veterans' rights. We do 2,000 investigations a year," he said. "A veteran is a veteran and should be treated with equality. The government of Canada has an obligation to make sure they have the benefits they need, not necessarily those they want."

While praising some of the improved benefits for veterans recently announced, he added, "When the minister told me that they were closing the gaps [in benefits], I told him, 'You have narrowed the gaps. They are still there.'"

William Kane of the residents' committee at Ste-Anne's Hospital in Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue also spoke, saying the committee is not getting the same amount of money for the veterans from the branches as it has in the past. "Without our programs, the residents sit in their rooms, they have no social life and they quiet down. We don't like that," he said.

Kane said the Quebec government gives them an annual grant of \$6,000 but it doesn't go very far for the 300 men and 30 women residing in the veterans' hospital.

Delegates also heard from Jacques Vezina of the centre CASA therapy agency in Quebec City. CASA offers counselling services for people dealing with addictions, many of whom are veterans. He said the centre is a national organization offering its services to francophones throughout Canada.



Clockwise from top left: Veterans Ombudsman Guy Parent (left) and Vice-President Eugene Montour salute after placing a wreath; the parade comes to attention; Dominion Vice-President André Paquette brings greetings. Opposite page: Norman Shelton is installed for another term as president.

Vezina was asking for the command's support in refurbishing the centre's gymnasium, which is particularly useful for clients who suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder. Delegates agreed to table the request.

Only a few resolutions had been concurred by the command's committees and presented at convention. Delegates agreed to a resolution that Dominion Command pay for a service officer position in Quebec, preferably placed near a military base or VAC office. Another resolution asked Dominion Command to assist branches in paying for monthly Internet service.

One resolution asked that curling and eight-ball be discontinued as dominion-level sports while expressing support for the cribbage and darts programs. Another resolution asked that *Legion Magazine*, including all editorial and advertising, be made available to all members, in colour and in the official language of choice.

In late resolutions successfully brought to the floor, delegates called on Dominion Command to reverse its opposition to having Remembrance Day declared a statutory holiday.

Paquette assured delegates that Dominion Command had listened to the message from the dominion convention in Edmonton last year and had made several cost-cutting measures at Legion House and to Dominion Command committees.

"When we get to St. John's [for the 2016 dominion convention], we're looking to have a balanced budget, which hasn't happened in years," he said. "We can't keep going to the reserve fund and grabbing a chunk of money and continue on."

A video was also shown of Dominion President Tom Eagles explaining changes at Dominion Command and highlighting the work it does for impoverished veterans in the Caribbean on behalf of the Royal Commonwealth Ex-Services League. Afterwards, \$865 was collected to support the RCEL.

Paquette also acted as elections chair. First up was the position of president. Norm Shelton of Terrebonne Heights Branch in Mascouche Heights was nominated for another term. Jean Theriault of Joseph Kaebler VC MM Branch in Rimouski, a former vice-president and first vice, challenged him for the position. Shelton was elected, making it his third term as command president.

Vice-President James Riddell of Arthabaska Branch in Victoriaville was acclaimed as first vice.

Seven candidates put their names forward for the three positions of vice-president, including incumbents Majelisa Corbett-Shelton of Hon. John Diefenbaker Branch in Laval and Eugene Montour of Mohawk Branch in Kahnawake. Challenging them were William Howe of Greenfield Park Branch, Claude Racine of Lt.-Col. Charles Forbes Branch in Loretteville, Alex Bialosh of Montarville Branch in St-Bruno, Marie-Ann Latimer of Aylmer Branch and Mike Fitzgerald of RMR Branch in Montreal. Delegates elected Montour, Howe and Racine.

For chairman, delegates nominated Tom Irvine of Hemmingford Branch, Christopher Wheatley of Chomedey Branch and Jean-Robert P  pin of Alphonse Desjardins Branch in L  vis. Irvine declined and Wheatley was elected.

Incumbent Madonna Boch of Hon. John Diefenbaker Branch was defeated by Rick Cartmel of Dorval Air Services Branch in Dorval for the position of treasurer. Past President Margo Arsenault remains in the position for another term.

The new executive is rare in that five of the seven elected members are veterans. Montour served with the United States Army in the Persian Gulf War, while Riddell and Howe are Cold War veterans and Racine and Cartmel served in United Nations peacekeeping missions. **LM**

CLOVERDALE HITS THE MARK WITH DARTS CHAMPIONSHIP

BY ADAM DAY

THE CAMARADERIE was amazing and the darts were flying at Cloverdale Branch in Surrey, B.C., as the branch played host to the Dominion Command Darts Championships on May 1-3.

The event began Saturday morning with a wreath-placing at the local cenotaph followed by a short parade to the branch.

Doubles play started bright and early. Halfway through the competition, Ontario, Manitoba-Northwestern Ontario, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia/Nunavut had already emerged as front-runners, but it was tight.

After five games, the Ontario team of John Verwey and Andre Carman from Blythe, Ont., Branch was out in front with 11 points and the other three teams were tied in second at 10 points.

It stayed close right until the last dart. In the final tally, Ontario ended with 21 points with the East Coast team of Jerry Myles and Chris Steiger from Centennial Branch in Dartmouth, N.S., right behind them with 19.

It was perhaps not a surprise to see Verwey crowned the doubles champion, as he has won the dominion singles championship four times and the team title once. "This is the one I was missing. It was that goal I was missing and now I got it, so it's extra special," said Verwey. "And [Carman is] one of my best buddies. So to win with him was pretty special, too."

With such a winning pedigree at the national level, it seemed natural to ask Verwey to outline the secret to his success. "I don't pay any attention to the score until it's all over," he laughed. "You need them all to win. I know what I've got to do and so I don't

need to look at the scoresheet to know I'm under the gun."

With the doubles wrapped up, the singles event kicked off in the afternoon. Close throughout, the singles competition ended up in a tie, which necessitated a play-off between Darren MacNevin from Charlottetown Branch and Ronald Looker from West Kildonan Branch in Winnipeg in a best-of-three match to decide the dominion champion.

In a flurry of darts, the first two games were split one apiece in what

on Saturday night, a huge crowd convened on Sunday morning to fight it out for the big prize, the dominion team championship.

Going into the competition, observers were looking toward Prince Edward Island as a slight favourite, a team which not only had a great deal of experience but also featured MacNevin, the newly crowned singles champion.

That was not to be, however, as after seven boisterous rounds of play it was Newfoundland and Labrador in front with a one-point



Dominion team champions (from left) Mitchel Burt, Patrick O'Grady, Gary Kavanagh and Jerry Spurrell receive their awards from Dominion Command Sports Committee member Clarence Paul.

seemed like 30 seconds. The last game, however, would not be so fast. Both MacNevin and Looker made it down to the double out with no trouble—meaning they needed just one dart to win—but both players uncharacteristically faltered on multiple attempts. Each had the championship up for grabs several times and missed. In the end, it was MacNevin who hit the double three to win the competition, roaring in joy and relief that it was over.

After a spirited session of bar-becuing and dancing at the branch

lead over New Brunswick at 15-14. The Nova Scotia/Nunavut team of Jerry Myles, Paul Laquant, Larry Barnes and William Jones had come on strong and was sitting at 13.

After a huge clash in the eighth round between Newfoundland and New Brunswick in which New Brunswick got the better of it, and another great round by Nova Scotia, it turned out there was a three-way tie going into the ninth and final round. The New Brunswick versus Nova Scotia match on board

RESULTS



Doubles champs Andre Carman (left) and John Verwey accept their trophy. Left: Singles champion Darren MacNevin (right) receives his award.



the second, they missed and Newfoundland stole the second. With the momentum going into the third, Newfoundland was unstoppable and they charged out of the gate, clinching the domination victory in a barrage of well-aimed darts.

three looked set to answer all the questions. The team from Blacks Harbour, N.B., Branch—Derek Hanley, Scott Tracy, Isaac Mullin and Mark Hebert—raced out to a 2-0 lead against their East Coast rivals and if they could win one more game they'd have the championship. But they lost.

The loss meant there was a tie between New Brunswick and the Portugal Cove, Nfld., team of Jerry Spurrell, Gary Kavanagh, Mitchel Burt and Patrick O'Grady and a best-of-three showdown to determine the championship.

While the Blacks Harbour team won the first game and had a dart for the championship at the end of

The resulting celebration was, well, significant.

"We were just ecstatic," said Burt a few minutes after the win. "We knew we had a good team but it's always tough no matter what."

With the victory locked up, it was time to celebrate. "We're always loud," laughed Burt. "But it's a job just to get here. And now we just have to come to the banquet tonight and have a good time."

Dominion Command Sports Committee representative Clarence Paul—also the national president of the Tuberculous Veterans' Section—felt that the weekend organized by the Local Arrangements Committee chaired by Scott

TEAM: Nfld.-Lab. (Portugal Cove Br.) 20; N.B. (Blacks Harbour Br.) 19; N.S./Nunavut (Centennial Br., Dartmouth) 17; Ont. (Col. Alex Thompson Memorial Br., Mississauga) 16; Que. (Terrebonne Heights Br., Mascouche Heights), Sask. (Moose Jaw Br.) 14; Alta.-N.W.T. (Jubilee Br., Calgary) 12; B.C./Yukon (Chemainus Br.) 11; P.E.I. (Charlottetown Br.) 10; Man.-N.W.O. (Flin Flon Br.) 5.

DOUBLES: Ont. (Blythe Br.) 21; N.S./Nunavut (Centennial Br.) 19; N.B. (Blacks Harbour Br.) 18; Man.-N.W.O. (Elmwood Br., Winnipeg) 15; B.C./Yukon (White Rock Br.), Nfld.-Lab. (Portugal Cove Br.) 12; Que. (Terrebonne Heights Br.) 11; Sask. (Moose Jaw Br.) 10; Alta.-N.W.T. (Jubilee Br.) 9; P.E.I. (Charlottetown Br.) 8.

SINGLES: P.E.I. (Darren MacNevin, Charlottetown Br.) 20; Man.-N.W.O. (Ronald Looker, West Kildonan Br., Winnipeg) 19; Que. (Stephane Rousseau, Terrebonne Heights Br.) 16; B.C./Yukon (Bill Durant, Courtenay Br.), N.B. (Derek Hanley, Blacks Harbour Br.) 14; Nfld.-Lab. (Patrick O'Grady, Portugal Cove Br.) 13; Alta.-N.W.T. (Gardner Poucette, Jubilee Branch Br.), N.S./Nunavut (Jerry Myles, Centennial Br.) 12; Ont. (Timothy Schryer, Sault Ste. Marie Br.), Sask. (John Brann, Moose Jaw Br.) 9.

MacMillan had been a success. "The spirit here is tremendous. I know they're all in competition against each other but they're patting each other on the back and shaking each other's hands," he said. "I think you have to be here to feel the vibe and see the guys. Sports have got to stay a part of the Legion." **LM**



52nd NOVA SCOTIA/ NUNAVUT CONVENTION

COMMAND RESTRUCTURE VOTED DOWN

BY ERIC HARRIS

A resolution to streamline the structure of Nova Scotia/Nunavut Command did not receive the approval of delegates at the 52nd Nova Scotia/Nunavut Command Convention hosted by Colchester Branch in Truro, N.S., on May 17-18.

In his report as chair of the Restructure Committee, First Vice Steve Wessel outlined how the committee was formed in September 2013 to review the command structure with a view to improving representation and reducing the size of the Provincial Executive Council. All branches were invited to comment, and approximately half responded, he said.

"There were many honest, helpful suggestions," said Wessel, "but one point was dominant: there is a disconnect in the structure implemented in 2009 [when seven districts were created], and requests were overwhelming to eliminate districts and return to zone representation."

Wessel introduced a resolution that would eliminate districts B, C, D, E and F, and bring zone commands back to the council table. However, this would result in an increase in executive council members from 13 to 20, and a concurrent increase in associated expenses, he said. An amendment, introduced from the floor and carried, proposed an executive council made up of one representative from Nunavut, two from Cape Breton and 10 from the mainland, thereby keeping the total at 13.

After several questions and comments from delegates, the restructure proposal (with amendment) was put to a standing vote, which required a two-thirds majority to carry. The vote was 81 for and 87 against.

It was a significant decision in a convention that saw 189 voting delegates attending. Formal proceedings began with a parade to the Truro Cenotaph, where wreaths were placed by guests of honour Nova Scotia Lieutenant-Governor John James Grant, Cumberland-Colchester-Musquodoboit Valley MP Scott Armstrong, Education and Early Childhood Development Minister Karen Casey, Dominion President Tom Eagles, Nova Scotia/Nunavut Command President Ronald Trowsdale, Colchester



Branch President Gerry Tucker, Colchester L.A. President Elly Suttis, Truro Mayor Bill Mills and County of Colchester Mayor Bob Taylor.

Highlights of the opening ceremonies included greetings from each guest of honour and a musical performance by singer-songwriter Chris Gill of Corner Brook, N.L., who performed his composition "Lest We Forget." Lieutenant-Governor Grant officially declared the convention open.

The Sunday afternoon session included Trowsdale's President's Report, which recounted highlights of his tenure, including the presentation of the first poppy to the lieutenant-governor, visits to Iqaluit Branch in Nunavut, and the command's support of the Paws Fur Thought service dogs for veterans initiative.

Trowsdale also reported for Dominion Executive Council, outlining many of the changes and cost-saving measures that have been implemented at the national level.

Command Service Officer Byron Mullett reported that the closure of the Veterans Affairs Canada office in Sydney, N.S., is having an impact. The command's caseload related strictly to applications to VAC has increased dramatically, with 50 cases on record in 2012, 167 in 2013 and 253 in 2014. The service bureau has recorded a 90 per cent success rate for favourable VAC claims in 2012-2014.

Reporting for the Finance/Building Committee, Wessel noted that the past three years have not been easy ones, but that the command's auditors had been "extremely impressed by the professional manner in which the command finances were presented to them" for the 2014 audit, as well as with the turnaround in the command's financial status. Administration, officer and committee expenses were reduced by more than \$52,000 in 2013. However, this was offset by a \$28,000 decrease in revenue, due to a shortfall in per-capita tax revenue from declines in membership. Program expenses increased in 2013 by \$85,000, most of which was attributed to the command's hosting of two veterans' transition programs. A deficit of \$108,815 was recorded for 2013.



Clockwise from left: Dominion President Tom Eagles speaks passionately about membership recruitment and retention. Convention delegates parade to the Truro Cenotaph. President Ronald Trowsdale addresses delegates. Opposite page: Newly elected Nova Scotia/Nunavut Command President Steve Wessel pledges to expand veterans' assistance programs.

Despite another four per cent drop in per-capita tax revenue, the audit report presented a better picture for 2014: total revenue increased by 13.5 per cent, while expenses were reduced by 14 per cent, or approximately \$145,000, leaving the command with a positive bottom line for the first time since 2010. The finance committee tabled a balanced budget for 2015, which was accepted by the executive council in February.

The command office building in Dartmouth is now 10 years old and beginning to show signs of wear in areas, such as the roof shingles on the windward side. Energy-efficient LED bulbs have been installed in all exterior security lighting.

Reporting for the Veterans Outreach Program Committee, Wessel reminded delegates of the committee's mandate to "extend a helping hand to veterans who are homeless or near homeless by promoting recovery-oriented care and connecting them with vital human resources and social services." He added that the work of the outreach program over the past two years has helped make the Legion in Nova Scotia a more credible and relevant organization within the ranks of serving Canadian Armed Forces members and veterans. "However," he said, "the challenges facing some of our veterans and the numbers of veterans needing assistance are on the increase, and the Legion's response to these challenges must keep pace."

Wessel then introduced guest speaker retired captain Medric "Cous" Cousineau, his wife Jocelyn and their service and therapy dogs, Thai and Munich. Cousineau is a co-founder and driving force behind the Paws Fur Thought initiative, which pairs service dogs with dis-

abled veterans living with post-traumatic stress disorder. He gave a detailed presentation on how the initiative got started, in particular with the support of Caen Branch 164 in Eastern Passage and N.S./Nunavut Command.

Nominations of officers for executive council were announced on Sunday afternoon, in advance of Monday's elections. Nominees included Roger Purnell of Bridgewater Branch, Ronald Trowsdale of Colchester Branch and Steve Wessel of Centennial Branch in Dartmouth for president; Melvin Crowe of Ashby Branch in Sydney for first vice; Bob Evans of Centennial Branch, Darryl Cook of Bridgewater Branch, Mervin Steadman of Ortona Branch in Berwick, and Jay Tofflemire of Eastern Marine Branch in Gaetz Brook for second vice; Sandra Ehler of Chedabucto in Canso and Jim Whitman of Pugwash Branch for treasurer; and Gary Higgins of Colchester Branch and Karen Lynch of Eastern Marine Branch for chair. Wessel and Crowe were acclaimed, and Tofflemire, Ehler and Lynch were elected.

After Eagles, acting as elections chair, formally installed each new officer, Wessel took to the podium. "We will continue to be vigilant regarding the way we do business," he said. "We will also work hard to curb the decreases in our membership base, to continue our support for youth programs, such as leadership camp and track and field, to increase our relevance within the Canadian Forces community and the veterans community, and to expand our assistance to programs, such as the Porchlight veterans peer support initiative, the Veterans Outreach Program and Paws Fur Thought. Let's move forward together." **LM**



snapshots

VOLUNTEERING IN THE COMMUNITY

Send your photos and news of The Royal Canadian Legion in action in your community to your Command Correspondent. Each branch and ladies auxiliary is entitled to two photos in an issue. Any additional items will be published as news only. Material should be sent as soon as possible after an event. We do not accept material that will be more than a year old when published, or photos that are out of focus or lack contrast. The Command Correspondents are:

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Submissions for the Honours and Awards page (Palm Leaf, MSM, MSA and Life Membership) should be sent directly to Doris Williams, Legion Magazine, 86 Aird Place, Kanata, ON K2L 0A1 or magazine@legion.ca.

Technical specs for photo submissions

(1) Digital photos—Photos submitted to Command Correspondents electronically must have a minimum width of 1,350 pixels, or 4.5 inches. Final resolution must be 300 dots per inch or greater. As a rough guideline, black-and-white JPEGs would have a file size of 200 kilobytes (KB) or more, while colour JPEGs would be between 0.5 megabytes (MB) and 1 MB.

(2) Photo prints—Glossy prints from a photofinishing lab are best because they do not contain the dot pattern that some printers produce. If possible, please submit digital photos electronically.

The Snapshots section is available online in the Community section of legionmagazine.com.

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\$330,000
to their
communities.



ROD HODGSON

At the presentation of \$2,000 to the Hawkesbury General Hospital Foundation from Hudson, Que., Branch are (from left) President Peter Mansell, Pierre Luc Byhaim, Donald Hay, Pierre André Duchemin and Branch First Vice Eric Connor. The branch also presented \$2,000 to Carole Ravenda of Lakeshore General Hospital Foundation.



ROD HODGSON

Peter Mansell (left), president of Hudson, Que., Branch, and First Vice Eric Conner present \$2,000 to Jarmela Lechner of the Centre D'Action Bénévole l'Actuel.

snapshots

VOLUNTEERING IN THE COMMUNITY



P. MACDONALD

Centennial Branch in Dartmouth, N.S., presents \$12,000 to Dartmouth General Hospital for the purchase of a new ultrasound machine. At the presentation are (from left) former president Evelyn Cole, hospital director Zita Longobardi, padre Carol Young, Bev Leal, Fred Tate, Second Vice Frankie Pond, service officer Bill Whitefield, poppy chair Terry Pond and President Richard Malin.



Poppy chair Terry Pond of Centennial Branch in Dartmouth, N.S. (right), presents \$5,000 for the Preston/Westphal army cadet corps to (from left) WO Melisha Fowler, RSM Bryce Bacon, Capt. Danielle Pittman and Capt. Paul Todd.



BEV MINGO

Showing off their certificates in the poster and literary contests at Tatamagouche, N.S., Branch are (front, from left) Cassie Hogan, Breanna Lepper-Belliveau, Josh Farrell, Beth Langille, Luca Langille, Garrett Tattrie, Sarah Patriquin, Abreanna Langille, Kennedy Cook and Caitlyn Hiltz. Looking on are (rear) Winnie MacKinnon, Edna Veno, Bev Mingo, Gordon Hillier, Bill Thomas, Alan Fahey and Dennis Tattrie.



At the presentation of awards in the poster and literary contests at Tatamagouche, N.S., Branch are (front, from left) Aslinn Wilson, Matthew Smith, Alicia Williamson, Josephine Martell, Christina Douglas, (rear) Malcolm Mattatall, Dennis Tattrie, Gordon Hillier and Bill Thomas.



DONNA REDMOND

Calais Branch President Roy Spencer presents a donation to Sackville sea cadets representative Cory Pickrem in Lower Sackville, N.S.



At Bay d'Espoir Branch in St. Alban's, N.L., President Christine Farrell (left) presents the Legionnaire of the Year award to Betty Benoit.



Megan Young accepts a certificate for her entry in the poster contest from Fred Maclean (left) and treasurer George Noel of Bonne Bay Branch in Woody Point, N.L. Young will be part of the 2015 Beaumont Hamel pilgrimage.

snapshots

VOLUNTEERING IN THE COMMUNITY



At the presentation of \$10,000 from Newfoundland and Labrador Command to the Caribou Memorial Veterans Pavilion are (from left) First Vice Frank Sullivan, Legion Action Committee past chair Calvin Crane, Veterans Pavilion manager Sharon Nolan, President Ross Petten and Action Committee chair Selby Luffman. The money will help pay for a caribou statue for the pavilion.



Dan Seaward (left) of Clarenville, N.L., Branch accepts the Legionnaire of the Year award from Randolph Whiffen.



Lawn, N.L., Branch President Harry Roul presents Fire Chief Wayne Strang with a defibrillator for the Lawn Volunteer Fire Department.



Bay D'Espoir Branch members Christine Farrell (left) and Margaret Power present poster and literary contest awards to local students in St. Alban's, N.L.



Visiting WW II veteran Allan Roberts are Twillingate, N.L., Branch members (from left) President Ron Sloan, Sgt.-at-Arms Calvin Boyde and secretary Carolyn Boyde.



Carbonear, N.L., Branch presents poster and literary contest awards to local students as provincial poppy and remembrance chair Berkley Lawrence (right) looks on.

snapshots

VOLUNTEERING IN THE COMMUNITY

BARRIERE BRANCH HELPS OUT

- Barriere, B.C., Branch has donated a total of \$10,480 to support various community endeavours, including Barriere Food Bank, Volunteer Information Centre, Search and Rescue and the District Hospice Society.



Les Radcliffe of Cranbrook, B.C., Branch congratulates Sonya Bennett on her second-place finish in the intermediate colour poster contest.



Les Radcliffe of Cranbrook, B.C., Branch congratulates Daryl Bloor for placing first in the intermediate colour poster contest.



Seaforth Highlanders army cadet corps representatives Capt. Mark Ireland and Dana Reid accept \$2,000 from poppy chair Pat Keeping (left) of Cloverdale Branch in Surrey, B.C.



Poppy chair Pat Keeping of Cloverdale Branch in Surrey, B.C., presents \$2,000 to Mariner sea cadet CP01 Ryan Martin.



Malahat Branch in Shawinigan Lake, B.C., congratulates Past President Barry Vollet (left) and Vern Gillie on receiving the 50 Years Long Service Medal.



At the presentation of \$5,000 to Variety Children's Charity are (from left) Delta, B.C., Branch executive member Bob Taggart and member Diane Downs, television reporter Robin Stickley, President Al Ridgeway and member Harold Howe.



At the presentation of a \$25,000 New Horizons for Seniors Program federal grant is MP Kerry-Lynne Findlay (centre) and Delta, B.C., Branch representatives (from left) Don McPhadyen, treasurer Tom Easton, executive member Bob Taggart, President Al Ridgeway, executive member Dave Olson and secretary Olwen Demidoff. The funds will be used for branch renovations.

snapshots

VOLUNTEERING IN THE COMMUNITY



Ron Mireau (left), Vancouver Island co-ordinator of the Wounded Warrior Run, accepts \$710 from Sgt.-at-Arms Dwight Grieves and vice-president Mike King of Malahat Branch in Shawinigan Lake, B.C.



At the presentation of \$5,000 in poppy funds to the Burnaby Hospital Foundation are (from left) foundation director Sylvia Zylla, North Burnaby, B.C., Branch representatives Sgt.-at-Arms Scott Browning, poppy chair Grace Browning, President Dave Taylor, First Vice Wilson Gurney and foundation President Cheryl Carline.



Brette Madden (left) of the Dawson Creek Hospital Foundation accepts \$3,500 from Dawson Creek, B.C., President Arleene Thorpe (centre) and Sgt.-at-Arms Barry Young. The money will buy a wheelchair weigh scale.



At the presentation of \$600 from Vancouver TVS to Vancouver Minor Baseball League are (from left) President Peter Merola, the league's fundraising co-ordinator Nadia Borean and branch vice-president Tony Borean.



Dawson Creek, B.C., Branch poppy chair Peter Batchelor presents \$5,660 to Sheri Murphy, residential care manager of Rotary Manor Care Home, for the purchase of medical equipment. Looking on is Barry Young.



At the presentation of \$565 from Oliver, B.C., Branch to the Communities for Veterans Foundation are (from left) Sgt.-at-Arms Jo Tanner, President Martin Foss, veteran Jim Stewart and foundation representatives Paul and Terry Nichols.



At the presentation of \$10,000 from West Vancouver Branch to the Lions Gate Hospital Foundation are (from left) President Michael Mulberry, service officer Harry Greenwood, foundation donor relations director Louise Campbell and B.C./Yukon Command Vice-President Valerie MacGregor.

snapshots

VOLUNTEERING IN THE COMMUNITY



In Mission, B.C., Mission City Branch President Pauline Mann (centre) presents \$1,750 to Patricia Jappy Loker (left) and Bev Pearson of The Residences. The money will buy medical equipment.



Sage Dziekan-Gwill, winner of the primary colour poster contest at B.C./Yukon Command level, is congratulated by First Vice Tim Murphy and poster and literary contest co-ordinator Sandi Patterson of Alberni Valley Branch in Port Alberni, B.C.



Past President Chris Yerburgh of Oliver, B.C., Branch presents \$1,500 to Capt. Craig Ralph in support of the Bighorn air cadet squadron.



Maia Zinselmeyer accepts a certificate for first place in the provincial-level essay contest from West Kootenay Zone poppy chair Harvey Traux (left) and Nakusp, B.C., Branch poppy chair Cheryl Truax.



At the presentation of \$500 from Trail, B.C., to the Trail Special Olympics are (from left) treasurer Alan Corth, athlete Stewart Babakeiff and President Greg Hill.



First Vice Tim Murphy and poster and literary contest co-ordinator Sandi Patterson of Alberni Valley Branch in Port Alberni, B.C., congratulate Akshey Sharma, for placing third with his black-and-white poster at B.C./Yukon Command level.



Summerland, B.C., Branch Sgt.-at-Arms Jim Robicheau presents a \$750 cheque to program manager Joan Monro (left) and chairman Vivian Beattie of RECOPE. The program offers seniors physiotherapy in and out of a swimming pool.



At the presentation of awards in the poster and literary contests at N.W. Miramichi Branch in Sunny Corner, N.B., are (from left) Haykee Ward, President Shelley Burt, Andi Ryder, Ryan Allison, contest chair Russell Whitney and Waylon Matchett.

snapshots

VOLUNTEERING IN THE COMMUNITY



At the presentation of provincial-level awards in the poster and literary contests at N.W. Miramichi Branch in Sunny Corner, N.B., are (from left) President Shelley Burtt, MacKenzie Silliker, Schalk Kruger and poppy chair Russell Whitney.



At the presentation of awards in the poster and literary contests at Norton, N.B., Branch are (from left) Bill French, Casey O'Neil, Hilary Kennedy, President Sandra Kierstead, Julia Boyd, Nikolas Johnson and Terry Campbell.



At Sackville, N.B., Branch Charlene McCully presents Laine Acton with a poster contest award.



New Brunswick Command First Vice John Ladoucer (left) and Anne McInnis of Fredericton Branch present an award in the poster and literary contests to Peter Yang.



Poppy chairman Victor Sears of Sackville, N.B., Branch presents \$500 to Flt. Sgt. Ashley Paterson for the Tantramar air cadet squadron.



President Terry Campbell (left) and First Vice Joe Stack of Peninsula Branch in Clifton Royal, N.B., present bursaries to students (from left) Jennifer Leach, William Stack and Darcie Stack.



Sussex, N.B., Branch presents command-level awards to literary and poster contest winners Emily Parks (front, from left) and Eve Bustin. Looking on are (rear, from left) President Joe Butler, poppy chair Doug McLean and contest co-ordinator Marsha Speight.

snapshots

VOLUNTEERING IN THE COMMUNITY



Marianne Harris (left) of Chatham Branch in Miramichi, N.B., receives the Legionnaire of the Year award from District Commander Tom Daigle.



Caileigh Crocker receives an award in the poster and literary contests at Chatham Branch in Miramichi, N.B., from committee chair Marianne Harris (left) and Second Vice Mavis Cooper.



At the presentation of \$1,000 from Lancaster Branch in Saint John, N.B., to the Rodney sea cadet corps are (from left) Lieut. (N) Alyson Sheffar, cadet liaison Al Wickens and Second Vice Brenda Sheffar.



Hanna Morin receives a provincial-level award in the poster and literary contests from (from left) Herman Good VC Branch President Eugene Godin, District Commander Terrance Spense and Sgt.-at-Arms Rejean Losier in Bathurst, N.B.



At Miramichi, N.B., Branch, Andrea Bell receives a poetry contest award from poppy chair Gerald Mullins.



Rogersville, N.B., Branch secretary Eva Pitre receives the Legionnaire of the Year Award from District Commander Tom Daigle.



Lancaster Branch in Saint John, N.B., sponsors students to attend the annual Youth Leadership Camp at Mount Allison University. At the presentation are (front, from left) President Larry Lynch, Laura Bonga, Hanna Mullin, Charly Bonga, L.A. President Penny Irving, (rear) Curran Slipp, MacGregor Knox, Lawrence Boyle and Sam Dumouchel.



Campbellton, N.B., Branch joins local army cadets in commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Second Battle of Ypres by placing a wreath at the cenotaph.

snapshots

VOLUNTEERING IN THE COMMUNITY



Charlottetown Branch presents a literary contest award to Katie Hughes. Looking on are Dave Howatt (left) and poppy chair John Yeo.



At the presentation of \$1,000 from Wellington, P.E.I., Branch to Club Richelieu are (from left) Second Vice Paul Gallant, sports chair Theresa Gallant, Club Richelieu President Gabriel Arsenault, President David Gallant and First Vice David Redmond.



Pine Falls, Man., Branch President Don MacLellan and L.A. representative Trish McLarnon present \$1,000 to Lori Vialoux of the Village Green Playstructure Committee.



Thunder Bay, Ont., poppy chair Sharon Scott (right) of Port Arthur Branch presents \$500 to chair Len Brickell and Fran Trane of the Military Family Resource Centre.



Sharon Scott (second from left), poppy chair for Port Arthur Branch in Thunder Bay, Ont., presents \$130 to (from left) regional cadet adviser Maj. Chris Mallyon, Flt. Sgt. Brandon Delin and Capt. Jennifer Mortensen of the Astra air cadet squadron.



At the presentation of \$2,500 from the poppy fund of Charleswood Branch in Winnipeg to the Winnipeg Military Family Resource Centre are (from left) First Vice Phil Otis, chair Alf Tait, MRFC representative Shannon Bisson and President Coby Wantzing.



Veteran Leonard David demonstrates the new upper body exerciser donated to Sunnywood Manor by Pine Falls, Man., Branch. In the background (from left) branch members Vivian Berthelette, Don MacLellan and Trish McLarnon present \$7,696 to Sunnywood representatives Nadine Forster and Brenda Rose-Wiebe.

DART TOURNAMENT RAISES FUNDS

- Bewdley, Ont., Branch raised \$110 for Heart and Stroke and \$200 for Cancer with a fundraising darts tournament.
- Port Elgin, Ont., Branch presented Certificates of Merit to Pamela Smith and Eva Stoddart.
- Trenton Branch presented the 50 Years Long Service Medal to Maurice Mullin.
- Streetsville Overseas Veterans L.A. in Mississauga presented \$4,500 to the branch.
- Elliot Lake Branch presented a 55-year pin to Tony Andrews.
- Lt.-Col. G.B. Cousens Branch in Georgetown presented a 50-year pin to Brimley Bastedo and a 55-year pin to Lorne Hunter.



At Hespeler Branch in Cambridge, Ont., Second Vice Betty Laidlaw presents \$1,200 to Lisaard House executive director Connie Dwyer while committee member Patricia Zabizewski (left) and former L.A. president Renee Dyke observe.



Bancroft, Ont., Branch Second Vice Roger Lake (left) presents \$2,000 for the homeless veterans program, \$2,000 for District F youth education and \$5,000 for the District F Hospital Trust to District F Commander Greg Kobold.



Honours and awards chair Monica Gilcrist-Smith (left) and President Virginia Fuller of Elliot Lake, Ont., Branch congratulate public relations chair Bob Manuel on receiving the 50 Years Long Service Medal.



In Barrie, Ont., Dr. W.C. Little Branch member Jim Purchase (right) visits long-term care facility resident Fred Andrews and presents him with a blanket from the branch.



At the initiation of new members at Harriston, Ont. Branch are (from left) Tuck Shannon, President Terry Fisk, Shelley Duchaine, Peggy Roger, committee member Ken Reuber, Fred Roger, Robert Wilson, Jeff Cummings and Sgt.-at-Arms John Book.



Maple Leaf-Swansea Branch in Toronto wins the provincial snooker tournament. With the trophy are (from left) District D sports chair Vic Sing, Hank Tarniowy, John Mercieca, Gary Slinger, Jerry Russell and provincial Sports Chair Vic Newey.

snapshots

VOLUNTEERING IN THE COMMUNITY



At Streetsville Overseas Veterans Branch in Mississauga, Ont., poppy chair Judy McNutt (left), President Ola McNutt and secretary-treasurer Benjamin Pearce (right) present \$25,000 to Trillium Health Partners Foundation development officer Kathleen Cymek.



Streetsville Overseas Veterans Branch in Mississauga, Ont., initiates new members. From left: Bradley Ellison, Elliot Wright, Susan Hammond, Les Nickason, Joseph Pasqun and Herbert Ruch.



At Valley City Branch in Dundas, Ont., Second Vice Rick Valois (left) and charities committee chair Stan Hicks present \$2,000 to Dundas sea cadets Lieut. (N) Wendy Sibley.



In Dundas, Ont., at Valley City Branch, poppy chair Jim Byron presents \$4,000 to Salvation Army representative Shirley Malloy.



Newbury/Wardsville food bank representative Evelyn Atwell (left) accepts \$500 from Newbury, Ont., Branch President Jeremy Alexander (centre) and seniors chair Glen Magee.



Zane Gilmour (centre) places third in the district poster contest. Congratulating him at Bertie Township Branch in Ridgeway, Ont., are President Jack Etheridge (rear) with his parents Brian and Holly Gilmour, sister Zoe and Mayor Wayne Redekop (right).



At Polish Veterans' Branch in Kitchener, Ont., poppy chair Jim Meyer (left), treasurer Jim Fraser (centre) and vice-chair Stan Howie present \$20,000 to St. Mary's General Hospital foundation community engagement director Kate McCrae. Bob Berg is in the background.

snapshots

VOLUNTEERING IN THE COMMUNITY



Fenelon Falls, Ont., Branch service officer Jackie Walter presents \$1,000 to PharmaSave pharmacist Phong Tan to support the walk-in clinic at the pharmacy.



Belleville, Ont., Branch President Andy Anderson presents \$2,000 to Gleaners food bank representative Susanne Quinlan.



Newbury, Ont., Branch President Jeremy Alexander (centre) and committee member Joe Rilett (left) present \$2,450 to firefighter Chad Trethaway.



At Polish Veterans' Branch in Kitchener, Ont., poppy chair Jim Meyer (left) and President Stan Howie (right) present \$30,000 to Grand River Hospital Foundation chair Helen Friedman (second from left) and Kim Wilhelm. Watching in the back row are Bob Berg (left) and treasurer Jim Fraser.



Highland Creek Branch in Scarborough, Ont., hosts a district veterans' dinner. Ontario Command Vice-President Sharon McKeown and husband Bill greet Jim Smart.



District D Commander Jay Burford (right) presents President Wayne Powell with a certificate commemorating the 85th anniversary of Highland Creek Branch in Scarborough, Ont.



Eganville, Ont., Branch hosts the district public speaking competition. District G youth education chair Tyrone Seeley (left) and District G Commander Garry Pond congratulate winners.

snapshots

VOLUNTEERING IN THE COMMUNITY



Service officer Victor Chan (left) and poppy committee member Sharon Wilson of Barrhaven Branch in Ottawa present \$14,000 to Perley and Rideau Veterans' Health Centre Foundation development officer Delphine Hasle and executive director Daniel Clapin.



Elliot Lake, Ont., Branch President Virginia Fuller (left) and lottery chair Marion Hemingway present \$5,000 to St. Joseph's Hospital executive officer William Elliot.



Port Elgin, Ont., Branch President Dan Kelly (left) and honours and awards chair Blair Eby present the 50 Years Long Service Medal to Michele Pepe (centre).



Petawawa, Ont., Branch poppy chairman Bob Lescombe (left) and President Helene Hahn present \$8,000 to Pembroke Hospital MRI fundraising committee representative Nancy Warren.



Pte. Joe Waters Branch President Pat Thompson-Perry (right) and Sgt.-at-Arms Urban Faria present \$400 to Milton Transition Housing chair Arnold Huffman in Milton, Ont.



Maj. W.D. Sharpe Branch in Brampton, Ont., presents \$2,000 to the Lorne Scots army cadet corps. At the presentation are (from left) cadet liaison Robert Walsh, parent support committee president Shannon Blakeley, padre Eleanor Clithero, Sgt. Kyle White and cadet liaison Dave Bawtinheimer.



Col. Alex Thomson Memorial Branch in Mississauga, Ont., wins the provincial darts tournament. With the cup are (from left) Ontario Command Sports Chair Vic Newey, Ivan Gamble, Michael Power, Perry Parsons, Jason Marchis and District D sports officer Vic Sing.

snapshots

VOLUNTEERING IN THE COMMUNITY



Trenton, Ont., Branch President Manny Raspberry, assisted by fundraising co-ordinators Lynn Felker (left) and Ed Schmidt (right), present \$1,770 to Wounded Warriors Canada President David MacDonald.



At the presentation of a \$25,000 New Horizons grant to Trenton, Ont., Branch are (from left) service officer George Whittle, Northumberland-Quinte West MP Rick Norlock, President Manny Raspberry and secretary Gloria Johnson.



At Bertie Township Branch in Ridgeway, Ont., First Vice Ernie Pigden congratulates Tucker Wood on winning his category at the zone-level public speaking competition.



At Col. John McCrae Memorial Branch in Guelph, Ont., President Doug Dolby (left) and poppy chair Wayne Rahn present \$20,000 to Welcome In Drop-In Centre representative Sister Christine.



At Col. John McCrae Memorial Branch in Guelph, Ont., President Doug Dolby (left) and poppy chair Wayne Rahn present \$20,000 for the Red Cross Meals on Wheels program to representative Karen Ines.



In Guelph, Ont., Col. John McCrae Memorial L.A. donates \$1,000 for playground equipment for a local school. Accepting the cheque from L.A. President Charlotte Matthews (right) are (from left) Melanie Mikelsen, Nikki Pettis and Hanna Morris.



In Guelph, Ont., Col. John McCrae Memorial Branch L.A. President Charlotte Matthews presents \$1,000 to Ken Danby Public School representative Katherine Scott.

snapshots

VOLUNTEERING IN THE COMMUNITY



Kanata, Ont., Branch service officer Peter Wilkins (left) presents \$7,100 to Perley and Rideau Veterans' Health Centre Foundation executive director Daniel Clapin.



President Tom Townsley and membership chair Mila Townsley of H.T. Church Branch in St. Catharines, Ont., welcome new members (from left) Grant MacDonald, Sherri Townsley, Cathy Taylor, Rhonda Chorange, David Patterson, Anne Bereford and James Richardson.



At the presentation of \$4,000 from East Toronto Branch to the Queen's York Rangers army cadets are (from left) President John Dufort, Maj. Richard Ferris, treasurer Gord Pearce and youth education chair Helen Pearce.



Burlington, Ont., Branch wins the provincial eight-ball tournament. At the presentation are (from left) District D sports chair Vic Sing, Jeff Maxwell, Kevin Houle and provincial Sports Chair Vic Newey.



Arnprior, Ont., Branch (from left) poppy chair Janet Clapham, President Harry Hereford and Second Vice Brian Kilby present a cheque for \$7,320 to Arnprior Regional Health Facility-Partners in Caring representative Lori Van Wyk.



South Carleton Branch in Manotick, Ont., hosts the District F and G public speaking competition. Pictured with winning students are District F youth education chair Lorraine Duncan (left), District G youth education chair Tyrone Seeley and District G Deputy Commander Sharon Murray (rear).

snapshots

VOLUNTEERING IN THE COMMUNITY



Lt.-Col. Harry Babcock Branch in Napanee, Ont., wins the Ontario Command cribbage tournament. With the trophy are (from left) Paul Mason, Jack Magilton, Linda Meisener, Larry Meisener and provincial Sports Chair Vic Newey.



On hand for the presentation of awards in the poster and literary contests at Orleans, Ont., Branch are (from left) Zone G-5 Deputy Commander Shirley Munroe, youth education chair Jeanine Mader, Zone G-5 youth education chair Shawn Tallon and First Vice Marty Keates.



Fergus, Ont., Branch Sgt.-at-Arms Conrad Sawyer (left) and President Tom Semanyk (centre) welcome new members to the branch.



Kincardine and Community Health Care Foundation representatives Becky Fair (left) and Mary Hall accept \$6,000 on behalf of Ontario Command, Branches and L.A. Charitable Foundation from MacDonald Branch President Maureen Couture and First Vice Mary Farrel in Kincardine, Ont.



Ontario Command President Bruce Julian (rear, right), provincial Youth Education Chair Dave Smith (left) and District H youth education chair Steve Larocque congratulate provincial public speaking winners (from left) Hailey Steinman, Lana Squires, Owen Schison and Camille Birney.



A.C. McCallum Branch in Niagara Falls, Ont., youth education chair Sarah Frenette presents awards to local winners of the poster and literary contests.

snapshots

VOLUNTEERING IN THE COMMUNITY



Temagami, Ont., Branch treasurer Mary Beth Shantz (left) and President Marcelle Berube present \$6,000 on behalf of the Ontario Command, Branches and L.A. Charitable Foundation to (from left) Temagami Health Centre's Dr. Stephen Goddard while hospital staff Chris Hill, Kim Corbett, Lynn Turcotte and Nancy Prescott look on.



In Toledo, Ont., at Kitley-Toledo Branch, youth education chairman Ruth Chapin congratulates literary and poster contest winners (from left) Melissa DeJong, Lydia DeJong, Kiersten Marx and David Feenstra.



John McMartin Memorial Branch treasurer Ken Heagle (left) and President Linda Fischer present \$500 to Lights of Hope St-Joseph Villa Seniors representative Tammie Menard in Cornwall, Ont.



At Kitley-Toledo Branch in Toledo, Ont., former president Al Nagy presents \$500 to Rideau air cadet squadron co-chair Alison Fath-York and Capt. Allyson Cordy.



In Cornwall, Ont., at John McMartin Memorial Branch, President Linda Fisher and Ron Racine present \$5,000 to Meals on Wheels co-ordinator Anna Marie Breuers.



Kapuskasing, Ont., Branch youth education chair Louise Harrison presents public speaking awards to local students.



Bells Corners Branch in Nepean, Ont., donates \$7,500 to the Perley and Rideau Veterans' Centre Foundation, represented by executive director Daniel Clapin (right). At the presentation are (from left) President Joel Van Snick, residents Clifford Churchill, Gene Weber and Gib McElroy and poppy chair Flora Riley.

snapshots

VOLUNTEERING IN THE COMMUNITY



Ontario Command District C track and field chair Crystal Taylor (right) presents \$734 for Timmies for Troops and Operation Santa Claus to Ontario Command Vice-President Sharon McKeown.



Goderich, Ont., Branch ways and means chair Norman Leddy (left) and President Paul Thorne present \$2,500 to Goderich Fire Department Chief Steve Gardiner.



Ontario Command District G Veterans Care and Comfort Fund donates \$14,000 to the Perley and Rideau Veterans' Health Centre Foundation in Ottawa. Foundation executive director Daniel Clapin (centre) accepts the donation from District G service officer Aubrey Callan (left) and District G Commander Gary Pond.



Ontario Command District C Commander Derek Moore (left) and youth education chair John Lowe congratulate public speaking contest winners Chelby Morris, Quin Martin, Madison Beishuizen and Abby Miles.



Edward MacDonald Branch in Angus, Ont., wins the provincial euchre tournament. Ontario Command Sports Officer Vic Newey (in back) and District C sports officer Anne McCullum (right) congratulate players (from left) Peter Matthews, Tom Pridham, Pauline Matthews and Sandy Pridham.



Sir Arthur Currie Branch in Strathroy, Ont., hosts District A and B public speaking. With the young public speakers are (from left) District B Deputy Commander Wes Kutasienski, Ontario Command Vice-President Sharon McKeown, District B youth education chair Mona Eichmann and District A youth education chair Craig Chartier.



Ontario Command District D public relations chair Chin Tam (left), Zone D-1 Commander Vic Sing and District D Deputy Commander Karen Moore congratulate Caitlyn Mei for her winning entry in the poster contest.

snapshots

VOLUNTEERING IN THE COMMUNITY



In Clarksburg, Ont., Beaver Valley Branch President Andy Weldrick (left) and vice-president Joe MacDonald (right) present \$540 to Canadian Veteran Freedom Riders for a flagpole to be installed at Cpl. Robert T. James Mitchell Park in Owen Sound.



Centennial Branch in Scarborough, Ont., presents the Legionnaire of the Year award to two couples: Wayne and June Hayes, and Brenda and Chin Tam. At the presentation are (from left) Sgt.-At-Arms John Latham, President Wayne Hayes, honours and awards chair Sheila Harris, L.A. President June Hayes, Brenda and Chin Tam, and Zone D-5 Commander Joyce Geddes.



In Welland, Ont., Rose City Branch President Gerry Noel (left) and poppy chair Vic Wilcox present \$6,000 on behalf of the Ontario Command, Branches and L.A. Charitable Foundation to Mary Sergenese of One Foundation for Niagara Health System.



Alison Kerker accepts a certificate for her first-place essay at district level from Tara, Ont., Branch President Shawn Trelford.



At H.T. Church Branch in St. Catharines, Ont., Zone B-5 Commander Lloyd Cull presents the Legionnaire of the Year award to Joann O'Farrell.



Ontario Command Districts C, D and E, team up to present public speaking awards. Making the presentations are (from left) District C youth education chair John Lowe, Ontario Command Vice-President Sharon McKeown, Sheila Harris, Helen Pearce and District E youth education chair Kate Palmer.



Ma-Me-O Beach, Alta., Branch representatives (in Legion dress, from left) Dallan Adair, Stu Raven, vice-president Ken Adair and secretary-treasurer Patrick Miller present \$5,000 to South Pigeon Lake Fire Hall firefighters and Fire Chief Allan Patterson (right). The funds will be used to upgrade jaws-of-life equipment.



Camrose, Alta., Branch presents \$10,482 to Covenant Health St. Mary's Hospital to buy two bariatric stretchers. At the presentation are (from left) site administrator Cherylyn Antymniuk, poppy chair Ragnar Gislason, L.A. President Kaethi Reixinger and foundation co-ordinator Anna Radchenka.



Byron Waters receives the Legionnaire of the Year Award from President Del Seabrook (left) and chair Sam Esopenko of Innisfail, Alta., Branch.

CADET MEDALS OF EXCELLENCE PRESENTED

- Saskatchewan Command selected 20 cadets to receive the Cadet Medal of Excellence.

Army cadets receiving the medal included M.Cpl. Madison Allberg, MWO Rylan McLennan and Sgt. Pierre Semenchuk of Saskatoon; WO Logan Lewis of Naicam; Sgt. Nathan Perry of North Battleford and WO John Anasarias of Wadena.

Sea cadets awarded the medal were PO1 Randi Ward of Fort Qu'Appelle; CP02 Charity Gareau of Prince Albert; CP01 Aida Emaha of Regina and CP01 Alexander Berthelot of Saskatoon.

Air cadets awarded the medal included Flt. Sgt. Geoffrey Massie of Biggar; Flt. Sgt. Gavin Walter of Carlyle; Flt. Sgt. Avery Phipps of Gravelbourg; Sgt. Justin Arenas of Melville; Flt. Sgt. Riley Dyck of Nipawin; Sgt. Dylan Scheerschmidt of Oxbow; WO2 Jack Gehring and Flt. Sgt. Luke Towers of Regina; WO1 Hayden Hodges of Swift Current and Sgt. Jay Shah of Saskatoon.



Shirley Elliott and David Ewen of Kelvington, Sask., Branch present zone-level poster contest awards to Knerup Pastor (left), whose junior coloured poster placed third, and Austin Novak, whose primary coloured poster placed first.



Shirley Elliott (left) and David Ewen (right), of Kelvington, Sask., Branch present zone, district and provincial awards in the literary and poster contests to Kelvington High School students (from left) Charlie Zelaney, Tanesha Novak, Cassidy Evans, Cameron Choquette and Britney Nicole Yasinsky.



Ways and means chair Mike Kozakevich (right) of Robert Combe VC Branch in Melville, Sask., presents \$500 to Kinettes (from left) Kristin Tether, Nancy Krasowski and Tricia Sylvester for the annual Kinsmen Telemiracle fundraiser.

LONG SERVICE AWARDS



Neil Smith,
Trenton Br., Ont.
60 years



Don Ash,
Madoc Br., Ont.
70 years



Cliff Trevin,
Bowmanville Br., Ont.
60 years



Fred Oates,
Elora Br., Ont.
70 years



John Bristow,
Innisfail Br., Alta.
70 years



Robert Atkinson,
Saskatoon Br., Sask.
70 years



John Meachin,
Bowmanville Br., Ont.
60 years



Earl Zwicker,
Everett Br.,
Chester Basin, N.S.
70 years



Robert Proctor,
Elora Br., Ont.
70 years



John Motherwell,
Malahat Br.,
Shawinigan Lake, B.C.
70 years



**Lorne "Barky"
Barkwell,**
Lipton-Bysart Br.,
Lipton, Sask.
60 years



**CORRECTION
Jean Roberge,**
Quebec
North Shore Br.,
Baie Comeau, Que.
70 years

MSM AND MSA (L.A.)



Pat Fitzpatrick,
Coldwater Br., Ont.



Millie Lewis,
Fredericton Br., N.B.



Victor Buziak,
Trenton Br., Ont.



David Flannigan,
Labrador City Br., N.L.



Jim Connell,
District F,
Ontario Command



Joan Robertson,
Labrador City Br., N.L.



Gary Behm,
Eganville Br., Ont.

PALM LEAF



Norman Newbold,
Malahat Br.,
Shawinigan Lake, B.C.



Jean Kerton,
Fredericton Br., N.B.

LIFE MEMBERSHIP

B.C./YUKON

Day Roberts,
Dawson Creek Br.

Barry Young,
Dawson Creek Br.

Lily Miles,
Pender Island Br.

Russ Murphy,
Pender Island Br.

Gordon Resvick,
Pender Island Br.

David Schissler,
Pender Island Br.

ALBERTA/NWT

Brian Clouston,
Innisfail Br.

Chris Strong,
Innisfail Br.

Robert Forman,
Millennium Br., Calgary

MANITOBA/NWO

Carl Sodergren,
Red Rock Br., Ont.

ONTARIO

Pamela Sweeny,
Brighton Br.

Ray Cameron,
Centennial Br., Scarborough

George Greig,
Centennial Br., Scarborough

John Harris,
Centennial Br., Scarborough

Henry Walls,
Centennial Br., Scarborough

Gerry McCarthy,
Dunnville Br.

Gonny Frech,
St. Joseph Island Br.,
Richards Landing

Gloria Riddel,
St. Joseph Island Br.,
Richards Landing

Mary Finch, L.A.,
Trenton Br.

Joan Locke, L.A.,
Trenton Br.

Larry Rankin,
Trenton Br.

QUEBEC

Jacques St-Laurent,
Quebec North Shore Br.,
Baie Comeau

NOVA SCOTIA/ NUNAVUT

Patricia Beson,
Calais Br., Lower Sackville

Brigitte Kuehl-McLellan,
Calais Br., Lower Sackville

DEPARTMENTS

LOST TRAILS

ADAMS, Rene—Recreation specialist, RCAF. Sought or family to return photos from 1960s. *Penny (Bailey) Moles*, Box 74501, Humbertown Centre, 270 The Kingsway, Etobicoke, ON M9A 5E2.

CAINS, John R.—C97495, Cdn. Postal Corps, served with REID, John F. Died April 2008. Comrades and family sought by Reid's son. *Ian Reid*, 514 E. Oak St. #A, Ojai, California 93023, U.S.A., 805-646-6083, 1950itr@att.net.

DAVIDSON, Robert D. (Bob)—Pilot, RCAF. Spitfire crashed in Normandy, June 28, 1944. Turned plane to avoid hitting a child and houses. Parents William and Jessie originally from Hamilton, Ont. Family sought. *Marie Anne Barrabe*, Le Rocher 8 61100 Landisacq, France, marieanne.barrabe@gmail.com.

FORD, Pte. Charles W.—772569, CAMC, WW I. Died Victoria, B.C., 1959. WW I medals sought by son. *Ernie Ford*, 136 Eastmount St., Oshawa, ON L1G 6K6, tennegf136@sympatico.ca.

SAMUELS, Flt. Lt. Thomas C.—Served RAAF, WW II and RAF (501035) 1950. Retired 1962. Sought or family to return items from RCMP, Surrey, B.C. *Gary Campbell*, Medals Adviser, Dominion Command, RCL, 86 Aird Pl., Ottawa, ON K2L 0A1, garcar@nbnet.nb.ca, servicebureau@legion.ca.

THOMPSON, L. Cpl. Nelson D.—F79444, 4 Pn., A Co., 61 CA(B)TC, WW II. Info sought by niece. *Susan Thompson*, 228-131 Maple Ave., Chateauguay, QC J6J 5J2, 450-844-8446, jnoconnor@yahoo.ca.

TURNER, Cpl. William J.—33186, CAMC, CEF, WW I. Born Newton Abbot, England 1883. Married Lillian Clitsome, born 1891. Followed him to Canada, with their son, 1919. Lived in London, Ont. Info and relatives sought. *Lesley Cross*, 41 Orchard Leaze, Cam, Dursley, Gloucestershire, GL11 6HY, U.K., lpdcross@talktalk.net.

REQUESTS

BEAVER BARRACKS: seeking contacts for airmen who resided there in the 1950s-60s for possible reunion. *Dick File*, 25-2725 A Patterson Ave., Box 126, Armstrong, BC V0E 1B0, 250-546-2568 or *Len Lipsett*, 2 Cross Rd., Dartmouth, NS B2W 3G9, 902-434-3053.

INFO WANTED re disappearance of Japanese anti-aircraft gun from Army Training Camp, Vernon, B.C., after 24th Fld. Regt. was disbanded in 1945. *Robert Spring*, 414-12258 224th St., Maple Ridge, BC V2X 8Y7, bobspring@shaw.ca.

YOUR EXPERIENCES sought for WW II documentary re aftermath of war, espec. from those who lived in France, Sweden, Italy, Netherlands, Belgium or Norway. *Jade McKenna*, ASA Productions Ltd., The Dairy House, Chartley Manor Mews, Stafford Rd., Chartley, Staffordshire ST18 0LL, U.K., jademckenna20023@aol.com, www.asa-uk.tv.

UNIT REUNIONS

ADMIRAL DESMOND PIERS NAVAL ASSOC. (SSNA/ADPNA)—Sept. 18-20, Cornwallis, N.S. *Al Cox* 425 Glen Allan Dr., Bridgewater, NS B4V 0A8, 902-530-5506, 902-523-1832 (cell), grumpy2u42@eastlink.ca; *Doc Halliday*, 902-685-2342; *Jerry Sigrist*, 902-543-6763, jerry.sigrist@eastlink.ca.

CAMERON HIGHLANDERS (Duke of Edinburgh's Own)—Oct. 16-17, Ottawa. *CH of O Regt 1 Ass'n*, Box 5433, LCD Merivale, Ottawa, ON K2C 3J1; *Chris Murphy*, 613-729-4888, chofoassociation@sympatico.ca, www.camerons.ca.

ELGIN REGT.—Sept. 12, St. Thomas, Ont. *Egide Vernack*, 2 Cedar St., St. Thomas, ON N5R 1M3, ecevernack@ody.ca.

HMCS UGANDA/QUEBEC—Sept. 11-13, Kingston, Ont. *Doug Walters*, 2620 Greenfield Ave., Kamloops, BC V2B 4P8, 250-554-0201, walters.omelchuk@telus.net.

IRISH REGT.—Oct. 2-4, Sudbury, Ont. *Capt. Craig Hannon*, 333 Riverside Dr., Sudbury, ON P3E 1H5, 705-669-2300, CRAIG.HANNON@forces.gc.ca

RCASC (ATLANTIC)—Sept. 18-20, Summerside, P.E.I. *Fred Beirsto*, 9 Imperial St., Apt. S, Box 673, Kensington, PE CoB 1M0, 902-836-4192, fred.beirsto@bellaliant.net.

SSR—Sept. 11-13, Weyburn, Sask. *Roz Saigeon*, 184 Riverglen Park SE, Calgary AB T2C 3Z1, 403-236-7320, saigeon@telus.net; *Robert Abbott*, 306-594-2530.

WARRIORS' DAY PARADE—Aug. 22, Toronto. *John Hymers*, 31 Forestgrove Cir., Brampton, ON L6Z 4T3, www.thewarriorsdayparade.ca.

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LEGION MAGAZINE

Canada and the cold war

BY J.L. GRANATSTEIN



Major-General Charles Foulkes inspects Canadian troops in England on May 12, 1944, less than a month before leading 2nd Canadian Infantry Division through the Battle of Normandy.

out, he became brigade major of the 3rd Brigade in the 1st Canadian Infantry Division. He was the General Staff Officer (Grade 1) of the 3rd Canadian Infantry Division by September 1940, Brigade Commander by August 1942, and then Brigadier, General Staff of First Canadian Army by August 1943. In January 1944, as the army prepared for the invasion of France, Foulkes was promoted to major-general and took command of the 2nd Canadian Infantry Division.

His rise had been spectacular, even before he had seen action, but none of his colleagues could understand how he had done so well. Foulkes was a dour, short, rather pudgy man, a cold fish in an army where very few senior officers were anything else. He was “mean and narrow” with a “hard-shelled Baptist mind” and “a sneering supercilious attitude toward anyone his own rank or below” and at the same time “grovelling” to everybody of higher rank, according to Harry Foster, a brigade major in the 1st Canadian Infantry Brigade and later the General Officer Commanding of the 1st Canadian Infantry Division in Italy. No one commented favourably on Foulkes’ capacity as a trainer of troops, and his division, badly battered at Dieppe in August 1942, likely had not fully recovered when he took command at the onset of 1944.

Foulkes’ performance in Normandy certainly was not stellar. General Guy Simonds, commanding II Canadian Corps, came close to firing him after the Operation Spring offensive in late July 1944, and his brigade and battalion commanders were just as unhappy, saying his orders lacked clarity. Yet when First Canadian Army commander Harry Crerar fell ill in late September and Simonds took

NO ORDINARY FOULKES

General Charles Foulkes had a profound influence on Canadian military policy

The key figure in the Canadian military from 1945 to 1960 was General Charles Foulkes, a powerful bureaucrat who mixed easily with public servants and politicians in Ottawa and with American and NATO colleagues in Washington and Europe. He was shrewd and calculating, more of a political animal than a soldier, and few could really explain his rise to eminence.

Born in Britain in 1903, Foulkes came to Canada with his parents,

briefly attended university, and then joined the Royal Canadian Regiment in 1926. He served in a variety of staff and field posts in the tiny interwar Permanent Force and went to the British Army Staff College at Camberley in Surrey, England. His assessments at Camberley were good, though not overflowing with praise: “Sound and competent.... Should make a good commander though possibly not a very sympathetic one.” When the Second World War broke

over temporarily, Foulkes replaced Simonds at II Canadian Corps. And when General E.L.M. Burns was sacked as the commander of I Canadian Corps in Italy, Foulkes got the job. Confounding his critics—and they were legion—Foulkes did well leading the Corps in its last months in Italy and in the fighting in the Netherlands in 1945.

But who was to lead the Canadian Army after victory in Europe? Asked his opinion, General Crerar pointed to Foulkes. “A very able, intelligent and thoughtful officer...especially suitable for very senior staff appointment,” he said. Implicit in this was that Foulkes was sound and safe. Simonds, the much more able commander, had a determined character and was probably more troublesome. Foulkes got the nod, becoming Chief of the General Staff in 1945.

His first postwar task was to cut the army down to its peacetime strength of some 25,000, a task he handled so well that there was little to work with when rearmament began in the late 1940s and accelerated with the outbreak of the Korean War in June 1950. The next year, Simonds took over as Chief of the General Staff while Foulkes, promoted to full general’s rank, became the nation’s first Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee, in effect the forerunner of the present Chief of the Defence Staff. Simonds would raise the army brigades that fought in Korea and deployed to Germany to serve with NATO, and by every account he was hugely effective in this role.

Foulkes’ position had less public visibility but it was crucial. He worked the bureaucracy before every major decision, finding out from the key deputy ministers how much money he might expect to get and how it might be spent. He was close to the defence ministers he served in the government of Louis St. Laurent,

Foulkes had a “a sneering supercilious attitude toward anyone his own rank or below.”

and he ensured he had the support he required to move the military’s requirements through the bureaucratic and political processes. He knew what NATO wanted and needed and how the Allied bureaucracy functioned, and he was a player in the alliance’s senior councils when Canada’s military weight mattered.

At home, he refereed disputes over funding between the three services at a time when the air force needed vast sums to modernize its fighter and transport fleets and the navy was creating a modern anti-submarine fleet to play a major role in the North Atlantic in close co-operation with the American fleet. Foulkes handled the development of radar lines across the North, and he presided over the creation of the North American Air Defence Command, a development that integrated RCAF fighters with those of the United States Air Force. Foulkes had been one of the first to see that Canada’s future now depended on its relations with Washington and the U.S. military, not with a much-shrunken Great Britain.

The Liberals initially favoured the creation of Norad, but they surprisingly lost the 1957 election to John Diefenbaker’s Progressive Conservatives and were smashed completely in the huge Diefenbaker win in 1958. The Tories’ defence minister was Major-General George Pearkes, VC, who had fought brilliantly in the Great War, served in the Permanent Force, then commanded a brigade and a division in Britain and the army on the West Coast during the Second World War. Foulkes had no difficulty persuading Pearkes and Prime Minister Diefenbaker to agree

to Norad, and then he was likely as astonished as they were when the opposition Liberals did a *volte-face* and opposed the agreement, claiming loudly that it might destroy Canada’s sovereignty. Foulkes survived the crisis that did real damage to the government, but his term as Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff expired in 1960 and he retired. He died in 1969.

What do we make of Charles Foulkes? He was better in high rank than he had been as a junior officer or even as a division commander. He was a political soldier through and through, one who could read the military’s future better than anyone else in Canada. But he was never loved or admired by his subordinates. Even the Americans had their doubts about him, although they calculated that they knew how to handle him. A mid-1950s briefing note prepared for the NATO commander, U.S. General Alfred Gruenther, observed that the Canadian was “pleasant but unimpressive, restrained and thin-skinned. He is not a forceful leader nor is he endowed with any great amount of brains. He appears to think highly of U.S. military leaders and enjoys associating with them.” In dealing with him, Gruenther was advised, “a little flattery and ‘personal attention’ on a ‘first name’ basis would be helpful.”

Foulkes’ long service in the Canadian military deserves to be remembered. He was one of the leaders who played a major role in the Second World War and the Cold War and in integrating Canada’s army and navy tightly with the American forces. But the Gruenther briefing note does cast its long shadow. **LM**



2 Learn about military dentistry at the National War Museum

If you happen to be in the Ottawa area this summer, stop by the Canadian War Museum to check out its special exhibit on the history of military dentistry. The exhibit is being presented in partnership with the Royal Canadian Dental Corps as a part of its 100-year anniversary. It tells the story of the integral work performed by military dentists over the past century.

Canadian War Museum
When: Until Nov. 15
Where: Ottawa
www.warmuseum.ca/event/oral-history-a-century-of-canadian-military-dentistry

4 Cheer on the parade

Every August, thousands of veterans and serving members of the Canadian Armed Forces march through the streets of Toronto in the Warriors' Day Parade. The parade ends at the Canadian National Exhibition, offering a day of fun and recreation for all. This year's theme is the 70th anniversary of Victory in the Second World War.

The 94th Warriors' Day Parade
When: Aug. 22
Where: Canadian National Exhibition, Toronto
www.thewarriorsdayparade.ca

1 Visit Halifax for Canada's largest annual military event

The Royal Nova Scotia International Tattoo is a festival of military music, dancing, parades and workshops held every year in picturesque Halifax. In addition to Canadian Armed Forces musicians and pipes and drums, there will be performance teams from as far away as Estonia, France, Germany, Norway and Sweden. It's a must-see for all Canadians.

Royal Nova Scotia International Tattoo
When: June 30-July 7
Where: Halifax
www.nstatattoo.ca

3 Go to beautiful St. John's for a military show

From early July until mid-August, climb up Signal Hill on the outskirts of St. John's to witness an award-winning historical animation program. There will be cannons, mortars and muskets combined with the martial tunes of the Fife and Drum Band, recreating the bygone age of 19th-century British military might.

The Signal Hill Tattoo
When: Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday at 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. (weather permitting), July 1 to mid-August
Where: St. John's, N.L.
www.signalhilltattoo.org

5 Have a water fight at Fort Rodd Hill

Placed on the southern tip of Vancouver Island, Fort Rodd Hill national historic site commemorates the significance of the Victoria-Esquimalt coast artillery fortress in the defence strategy of the British Empire and Canada, 1878-1956. This summer it is holding Victoria's largest squirt gun battle as a part of the signature Fab Forts events. There will be face painting, live music and capture the flag. Bring the kids or grandkids!

Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse National Historic Sites
When: August 23, 2015, from 10:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Where: Victoria
www.pc.gc.ca/eng/lhn-nhs/bc/fortroddhill/activ/activ2015.aspx



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